

"ROLLER BALL"

An Original Screenplay

by

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First Draft Screenplay
January 25th, 1974

ROLLER BALL MURDER

1. INT. THE HOUSTON TRACK NIGHT

A floodlit hardwood track fifty yards long and thirty yards wide. Noises of the crowd, thousands, jammed close to the track, and receding into the darkness.

A cannon fires and around the far curved bank of the track comes a shiny roller ball travelling at tremendous speed toward the camera.

2. INT. THE TRACK

The ball zooms around the track once, twice, then begins to fall with diminishing centrifugal force and rolls into the infield.

3. INT. THE CANNONS

Mounted at spaced intervals around the top of the track are the cannons which fire the roller balls. One of them fires again and a ball rumbles out, riding the groove at the top of the track, at first, so it doesn't leave the track and spin into the crowd, then, losing speed, edging down the curved sides of the track itself.

Titles begin.

4. INT. THE RUNNER

A Houston runner -- armed with his lacrosse-like paddle -- waits for the ball. It hurtles toward him and he scoops it up. Even as he does this, another cannon fires and the noise of the crowd begins to build.

5. INT. THE BIKERS

The three Houston bikers roar slowly around the track in formation. Finally, one peels off and speeds up, heading toward the runner who carries the ball. Deftly, the runner jumps aboard the motorcycle as it passes.

6. INT. BIKERS AND RUNNERS

They move in a ballet of man and machine now: more balls being fired, scooped up, runners hitching rides, the bikers moving in on cue, swooping down from high on the track.

7. INT. JONATHAN LEADING THE SKATERS

The crowd erupts as the skaters move onto the track. "Hou-ston! Hou-ston!" they chant.

8. INT. THE PACK

The Houston team moves in consort, a slow, graceful, rhythmic pack, powerful and confident: the eight skaters, brawny and armoured in their padded leather suits and helmets, the three bikers cruising around them, the runners sitting aboard the back of the bikes with their paddles ready. Jonathan and Moonpie lead the pack and exchange a glance.

9. INT. THE MADRID TEAM

Faces of the Madrid players, intently watching the Houston pack as it circles the track. The crowd continues to chant.

10. INT. MULTIVISION BOOTH

High above the track the engineers monitor the pack in a series of shots displayed on a multi-image console. The chant alters into a cry of "Jon-a-than! Jon-a-than!"

11. INT. JONATHAN AND THE PACK

JONATHAN E leads the Houston team, skating out front. He is a massive man, powerful and casual, and he raises a glove in acknowledgement to the crowd.

12. INT. THE MADRID TEAM

Houston's opponants skate onto the track. The players of both squads wear spiked leather gloves, helmets, leather suits with the appropriate corporate colors, and numerals.

13. INT. THE FLAGS

Corporate flags surround the track. Houston's orange is the same as that of the ENERGY corporation, Madrid's green the same as the green of the FOOD corporation flag.

Below, on the track, the pace quickens with both teams in motion.

14. INT. THE GAME BEGINS

A cannon fires a ball onto the track and the bikers go in pursuit. The crowd is on its feet and frantic.

End of titles.

15. INT. ATTACK OF THE MADRID BIKERS

Two Madrid bikers crash into the Houston pack. One goes down, taking four Houston skaters into a pile-up. The other swerves away, the biker regaining his balance.

16. INT. THE ATTEMPTED PASS

A Madrid runner fields a ball, jumps on the back of a passing Madrid bike, and heads toward the Houston pack. The Houston pack holds, jamming the track so the biker and runner can't break through.

The bike falls. As the biker tries to escape into the infield, Jonathan swoops in and flattens him with a blow across the shoulders. The runner is quickly dropped by another skater as he tries to defend himself with his paddle. The ball is knocked loose and rolls into the infield.

17. INT. THE HOUSTON PACK

The Houston team forms its pack again as another ball goes into play. They skate with deadly confidence.

18. INT. HOUSTON BIKER

A Houston biker swoops high off the wall and bumps a Madrid skater out of play as the skater falls behind his pack.

19. INT. THE CROWD

Frenzied, they begin their chant again: "Hou-ston! Hou-ston!"

20. INT. SCORING

A Houston runner fields a ball, leaps on the rear of a Houston bike. The bike with the runner and ball aboard heads back up the track, duels a Madrid bike, briefly, breaks away, and speeds past the Madrid pack below.

21. INT. THE STATISTICS BOARD

Score: Houston 1, Madrid 0. The fans scream their delight.

22. INT. JONATHAN AND A MADRID SKATER

They skate side by side, swatting at each other with their spiked gloves.

23. JONATHAN

A blow from his opponent's glove puts a scar on his helmet. But Jonathan skates on, concentrating on this hand-to-hand battle.

24. INT. JONATHAN AND THE MADRID SKATER

Jonathan feints, then drives a blow under his opponent's raised arm. As the man doubles over in pain and falters, Jonathan swerves, drops a shoulder, and bumps the man into the infield.

25. INT. ACTION MONTAGE

A Madrid player jumps to avoid a ball whizzing at him. Still in mid-air, he takes a clubbing blow from a Houston player who skates by him.

A Houston player loses his helmet from being struck by a paddle. Down on one knee, he takes a blow from a Madrid skater which tears away half his face.

The pack moves, shoulders rolling. They advance into the camera like tanks. Substitutes enter the track, fastening their helmets.

A ball catches a Madrid player and sends him sprawling.

Referees watch the game from their stations in the infield. Their red arm bands announce their duty, but they watch without interest.

The crowd rips apart the green Madrid flag.

A Madrid runner fields another ball, hitches a ride with his biker, and the two of them advance on Jonathan. The bike reaches him, but Jonathan eludes the shield and pulls the runner off as it passes.

A Houston runner sits in the infield, a bone protruding from his arm.

26. INT. MULTIVISION BOOTH

An engineer in the booth switches all screens onto Jonathan: various full-length and close-up shots as he skates.

27. JONATHAN

He skates, looks over his shoulder, skates on, his lips moving with the continuing chant of the crowd: "Hou-ston!"

28. JONATHAN SKATING

Two opposing skaters are fighting as Jonathan swoops in and grabs the Madrid skater around the head. Jonathan literally skates off with him, pulling the helpless skater along, and bashes him and lets him drop.

29. ACTION MONTAGE

The scoreboard: Houston 7, Madrid 1.

A Houston skater, MOONPIE, skates hard to avoid an onrushing Madrid

biker, then sidesteps at the last moment as the biker skids and tumbles into the infield where the bike explodes in flames.

The crowd, hysterical, throws its fists in the air.

A cannon fires out another ball.

JONATHAN and MOONPIE skate beside each other, signal at something ahead on the track.

A Madrid runner waits, his paddle back ready to strike as the two approach him. He swings, misses Moonpie, and Jonathan delivers a fierce body block. Struggling up, the runner receives a sharp backhand from Moonpie. Then Jonathan grabs him, struggles with him for a moment, then casually drops him in the path of a roller ball which comes toward them. The runner is carried away by its impact.

30. INT. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

Cheered by the crowd, the two skate together. Moonpie raises a fist by way of returning the crowd's salute. Jonathan clasps his teammate around the neck.

31. INT. LOCKER ROOM NIGHT

An aniseptic room of white and orange and stainless steel. Metallic sounds. Players in towels, calling to each other.

Jonathan sits on the rubdown table, his legs out, a towel draped over him. A masseur works on his legs and feet. MOONPIE is there, a drawling, good-natured giant, about 25, with a fixed smile which can become a snarl in the brutality of roller ball.

MOONPIE

So: we got two games left, Jonathan, and
guess who we play first? Tokyo. Now who'd
ever thought they'd get in the playoffs?

32. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

Moonpie, clowning, can make Jonathan feel good like no one else.

JONATHAN

They're pretty good. They've got the old samurai spirit, you know, Moonpie.

MOONPIE

But they're only about this tall! They're little guys, you know that.

33. JONATHAN

Grins at Moonpie, winces slightly as the masseur works on.

JONATHAN

Last time we played Tokyo, those little guys climbed all over you. Hey, careful there -- that's all bruise. They beat you up for practice, Moonpie, before they played the rest of us.

34. MOONPIE

Grins broadly. Then cuts his eyes to the locker room entrance.

MOONPIE

I can't get on a man to man basis with a pygmy or an oriental. Don't know what it is. I just don't

hit 'em as hard as I ought to. They don't have such prejudice against me, but I -- oh, oh, hey: look over there. We got ourselves some executives in here.

35. INT. LOCKER ROOM

MR BARTHOLEMW enters with his entourage of executives, aides, and guards. The executives and aides are dressed in executive black with the orange shirts of the ENERGY corporation. Bartholemew is sixty, worldly, and takes in the room carefully as he enters.

A brief choreography of power here: the guards and executives slip into place, taking over the room, and the athletes pay deference.

Bartholemew, who is never loud, addresses everyone as he moves toward Jonathan and Moonpie.

BARTHOLEMW

It is a beautiful mayhem, isn't it, played properly?

Played by champions? You were fine today, all of you, you were mean and sharp.

Jonathan starts to get off the table as Bartholemew approaches, but the executive gestures for him to stay put. Bartholemew gives Moonpie a backhand pat on the chest. The Houston TEAM EXECUTIVE intercepts the Bartholemew party, shakes hands with Bartholemew. The TEAM EXECUTIVE is dressed like the players, but smaller and silver haired. Bartholemew addresses him.

Your boys did well again, very good.

The Team Executive beams at the compliment as Bartholemew turns his attention to Moonpie.

36. BARTHOLEM EW AND MOONPIE

BARTHOLEM EW

And you rolled today, you really rolled. You play like our champion here, don't you? You take lessons from him?

MOONPIE

Yessir, he taught me a few tricks. He gives lessons to the other teams, too.

37. INT. AREA OF THE RUBDOWN TABLE

Mr Bartholemew turns so everyone can hear. He is expansive, but, again, not actually loud.

BARTHOLEM EW

This season the Houston team has given a number of lessons. Five billion Multivision sets around the world were tuned into this game today. Everyone's watching you, you got another championship, you're rolling. How're you, Jonathan?

JONATHAN

Feeling mean, Mr Bartholemew. Good to see you.

BARTHOLEM EW

Stuffy in here, very warm. Can we have some drinks?

The aides move at this mere suggestion, one of them repeating Bartholemew's request in the identical tone. The Team Executive goes after drinks with an aide.

Jonathan sits on the edge of the rubdown table, throws a towel around himself, waves the masseur away. Bartholemew has a benevolent smile for his champion, but speaks, still, so everyone can hear.

38. BARTHOLEMEW JONATHAN'S POV

BARTHOLEMEW

Jonathan E: that's the name, you just stay the same, don't you? Game after game, year after year.

He turns so the others can appreciate his remarks.

He's worn out four or five good teams here in Houston. Lots of championships. And the ENERGY corporation has a hard time, Moonpie, figuring out how we can pay him properly. We can't think up any more rewards for him. You'd like us to have that problem with you, wouldn't you?

MOONPIE VO

Yessir.

BARTHOLEMEW

Well, you're like Jonathan, you play with abandon, so you'll have your day, don't worry.

Turns to Jonathan again, softens his tone.

But this is Jonathan's season: ah me, it is.

We've got you on Multivision, a special program all about you, the whole world will watch, this is your year. Almost every year lately seems like yours, Jonathan. So: how many games left? Two?

39. JONATHAN, BARTHOLEMW AND MOONPIE

JONATHAN

Two, that's right. Looks like Tokyo next.

BARTHOLEMW

Expansive again.

Only two games left, the team's healthy, the champion says he feels mean: no problems here.

The aides and Moonpie return Mr Bartholemew's smile and agree. The Team Executive and the aide arrive with drinks in paper cups and distribute them.

Another aide opens a small silver box and Mr Bartholemew takes a pill from it. Moonpie looks on with interest, so gets offered one and accepts.

BARTHOLEMW

Happy dreams, Moonpie. You've got a bad habit there.

More laughter, general good feelings. Both Moonpie and Mr Bartholemew pop a pill and finish off their drinks.

BARTHOLEMW

What is this? Fruit juice?

MOONPIE

Very healthy, Mr Bartholemew.

More laughter from everyone.

40. BARTHOLEMEW AND MOONPIE

Mr Bartholemew drapes an arm over Moonpie's shoulder.

BARTHOLEMEW

You know what this habit will make you dream?
You'll dream you're an executive, Moonpie, and
you'll have your hands on all the controls and
you'll wear a black suit and make decisions. But
you know what? You know what the executives dream
out there behind their desks? They dream they're
great roller ballers, they dream they're Jonathan.
They get the women. They have muscles, they bash in
faces.

Bartholemew turns back to his aides, separates himself from
Moonpie as everyone laughs and shares this.

41. BARTHOLEMEW JONATHAN'S POV

He speaks to his aides, who react immediately. Then he turns his
empty cup up, taps the top, drinking the last drop.

BARTHOLEMEW

See if we're ready to go outside. We don't want to
keep these boys all day.

He looks down at Jonathan, peering over the rim of his empty cup.

Jonathan, listen: come see me. Over at the
ENERGY center.

42. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMEW

Curious, Jonathan looks up at Mr Bartholemew as the aides and guards begin to file out. Moonpie, who has been given such special praise, is touched on the arm and congratulated by the aides as they leave.

JONATHAN

What's it about? The Multivision special?

BARTHOLEMEW

Nothing to worry about. Come see me.

Bartholemew turns once more, moving away now, smiling broadly.

This is a great team. Great city, great stuff out there today. I'm happy I stopped in -- even if I had to drink fruit juice.

Jonathan smiles, but everyone else gives Mr Bartholemew undue response and laughter as they file out.

43. JONATHAN

Standing, Jonathan throws the towel off his shoulders.

44. INT. JONATHAN DRESSING

Jonathan, before a mirror, zips up his jump suit and combs his hair. Moonpie comes up behind Jonathan so their faces are both in the mirror. Jonathan cuts his eyes briefly, glancing at Moonpie.

45. EXT. CONCRETE PLAZA DAY

Jonathan and Moonpie stroll in the sunlit plaza flanked by bodyguards. A crowd lines their way. Moonpie watches the girls in the crowd and walks backward for a few steps flirting with one of them. Jonathan's bearing is graceful and powerful. He wears is flat-brimmed Spanish hat tilted forward.

46. INT. JONATHAN DRESSING AGAIN

Jonathan fixes the Spanish hat on his head. Moonpie edges back into view in the mirror. While Jonathan takes particular care with his hat, Moonpie begins to examine his teeth. Finally he draws his mouth open wide with his fingers, making a face which gets Jonathan's attention.

47. EXT. SHADE TREES, CONCRETE PAVILION DAY

Jonathan still strolling with Moonpie and the guards. Girls and young men along the route plead for his hat, so he finally stops, takes it off, and pantomimes a question: "This? You want this?" They squeal and plead and he pretends to sail it their direction, but instead fits it back into place, waves, and walks on. Moonpie enjoys his hero in this. The guards remain stolid.

48. INT. JONATHAN DRESSING, THE GUARDS

A guard fixes Jonathan's collar, brushes off his shoulder at the mirror. Other guards assemble, a total of five. Moonpie pats the long-barrelled pistol underneath a guard's arm and purses his lips with admiration. They all move to a door and go out into the sunlight.

49. EXT. WALKWAY DAY

Jonathan, Moonpie and the guards walking in the dappled sunlight beneath the limbs of trees. Jonathan and Moonpie talking.

Suddenly a rubber ball rolls up to Jonathan's feet and two boys, each about five years old, burst through the guards as they chase it. Jonathan holds up a hand, letting the guards know this is all right.

Moonpie and Jonathan crouch and talk to the boys. Soon, a bargaining session: the boys want to trade their ball for Jonathan's famous hat. All this established in pantomime. The guards remain aloof as Moonpie laughs. Finally, Jonathan agrees -- and places the hat on one of the boy's heads. Moonpie is awarded the ball, but returns it to the other boy.

Jonathan and Moonpie stand as the boys run off with their prize.

50. INT. LONG CORRIDOR DAY

Jonathan, alone now, goes through a series of glass doors and along the corridor.

51. INT. ELEVATOR

And up in an elevator, passing floor after floor. He watches the lights marking the floors with boredom. A poster: ENERGY-GENIUS.

52. INT. AT A DOORWAY

And he arrives at a doorway where a girl attendant greets him, holding an orange duster for him to slip on. As she opens the door she explains something to him briefly, smiles, and ushers him inside.

53. INT. THE GLASS SCULPTURE DAY

A long room -- and at the far end, hanging from the ceiling and touching the floor, a giant mobile sculpture made of shards of golden glass and mirrors. Jonathan approaches slowly.

54. INT. THE GLASS SCULPTURE JONATHAN'S POV

Jonathan approaches and enters the sculpture, parting it like a curtain. It makes a sound like wind chimes.

55. CENTER OF THE MOBILE SCULPTURE JONATHAN'S OV

Finally a hollow space, a round clearing of some five feet across in the center of the sculpture. Mr Bartholemew sits on a cushion facing Jonathan -- in a peaceful Zen-like pose. His hands make a steeple over his nose. His eyes look up to acknowledge Jonathan's entrance.

56. JONATHAN

He makes his way into this cramped space, trying awkwardly to get clear of the hanging glass and to take the cushion opposite Mr Bartholemew. Sitting down, he accidentally cuts his finger on a piece of the glass.

57. BARTHOLEMEW

He watches Jonathan, brings his hands down somewhat, speaks with quiet reverence. Like Jonathan, his back is against the shards of glass -- and anything except the most delicate movement causes a tremor and sound.

BARTHOLEMEW

Come in, Jonathan. Keep silence with me
for a minute, won't you?

58. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMEW

Contemplative quiet. Mr Bartholemew closes his eyes, takes a deep breath, but Jonathan is ill at ease: cramped, his finger still bleeding slightly. He struggles a little for tolerance as Mr Bartholemew has it his own way.

Jonathan clears his throat. No response. He shifts slightly and the glass accentuates his movement. At last Bartholemew lifts his eyes.

BARTHOLEMEW

Like my contemplation unit?

JONATHAN

Looking up at it, trying to be pleasant.

Yeah, very nice. I cut my finger.

BARTHOLEMEW

It's important to have a place to think
things out. You have your ranch -- I know
you take a lot of pleasure in it.

Jonathan tries a smile, puts his finger in his mouth, sucks.

BARTHOLEMEW

Just use the duster, there, wipe it there.

Sorry, Jonathan.

He pauses, watches Jonathan, gathers himself slightly as Jonathan blots his finger.

You've had an amazing career and you know, uh, what we think of you at ENERGY, how proud we are of the Houston team.

59. BARTHOLEMEW

Knits his brow, waits.

BARTHOLEMEW

Now, well, this is it: there are executives who want you out. They want you to retire from the game.

Waits for this to sink in. Tries a pleasant tone.

I know this won't make you unhappy -- not with the playoffs coming up. You've had a long season already, the playoffs are always dangerous.

60. JONATHAN

Puzzled, he waits for more.

JONATHAN

Retire now? Before the playoffs? How can I do that?

BARTHOLEMEW VO

On the special program on your career coming up on Multivision. There are some who feel -- well, that the program should now be used to announce your retirement.

JONATHAN

Who wants this?

61. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMEW

BARTHOLEMEW

When the special was first planned by ENERGY, we saw it as a good thing. Now -- the executive directorate wants a change. The special is scheduled, viewers all over the world are expecting it, so this seems the right time for your announcement.

JONATHAN

The Houston team depends on my skills. Players depend on me.

BARTHOLEMEW

Well, let's think through this together.

He makes a steeple with his fingers again, pauses.

You know the how the game has served us: it has a definite social purpose. Nationalism is gone, peoples aren't divided up into warring tribes anymore,

fighting among ourselves, even the corporate wars are over, and we have the executives of ENERGY and the other majors -- TRANSPORT, FOOD, LUXURY, the rest -- who make decisions on a global basis for the common benefit.

JONATHAN

But a team is a unit -- it plays with certain rhythms.

62. BARTHOLEMEW

Not acknowledging Jonathan's protest.

Everyone has all the comforts, you know that, too. No poverty. None. And many luxuries: you enjoy all of those, same as if you were in the executive class. No sickness, no needs, no lack of pleasure. Corporate society has taken care of all that. And as you know the only thing asked of anyone, ever, is that he not interfere with management decisions.

63. BARTHOLEMEW AND JONATHAN

JONATHAN

I just want to understand this. And someone needs to understand the situation with the Houston team, how it --

BARTHOLEMEW

It isn't a matter of the team.

Mr Bartholemew, slightly annoyed and at a loss to explain, shifts on the cushion. The glass behind him picks up his movement and sends a tremor through the whole sculpture.

And that's not all either, there's another part: they want you to announce you're quitting because the playoffs are too tough. And because you're not up to playing anymore.

Jonathan stares at Mr Bartholemew.

You've had ten years in the game, longer than anyone ever. Now the world can watch you on Multivision, see your best moments in the game, and you can excuse yourself. It won't be bad. Anyone watching will understand.

JONATHAN

I'm not sure I do.

BARTHOLEMEW

Are you arguing? You're still aching to get out there and watch those balls come around at 300 miles an hour?

JONATHAN

Exasperated, but smiling.

It's not that I'm arguing. I just want to see why.

64. BARTHOLEMEW JONATHAN'S POV

Mr Bartholemew makes a steeple with his fingers again, draws in his breath.

BARTHOLEMEW

You know this is for your own benefit, as well as anyone. You must know that, Jonathan. All decisions concerning you are.

65. JONATHAN

JONATHAN

Well, I lost Ella. The ENERGY corporation took my wife away from me because an executive wanted her.

66. BARTHOLEMEW AND JONATHAN

A pause. Mr Bartholemew considers this accusation.

BARTHOLEMEW

You know I'm not going to review that again, Jonathan. You know this was before I came to ENERGY, that I had nothing to do with that. And you know that your wife wanted to leave herself.

Jonathan turns his head away, smirks.

Now. The team is beside the point. And you're going to retire, that shouldn't be too hard for you, it's a stupid game, after all, an awful game,

and you ought to be glad to be out of it.

67. JONATHAN

He gazes down at his cut finger. A thoughtful pause, then he speaks absently.

JONATHAN

My finger won't stop bleeding.

He sighs, looks up into the shimmering glass sculpture.

Oh, Mr Bartholemew, I don't know, I just don't.

I realize you didn't have anything to do with all that, with Ella leaving me. But I made myself a promise. God, that was ten years back, but I promised myself --

BARTHOLEMEW VO

Jonathan --

JONATHAN

And you're right: I ought to be perfectly happy to stop. Who'd want to play roller ball? But I don't understand and I don't know why, but I feel this, uh, resistance in me. I don't really even understand that --

68. BARTHOLEMEW JONATHAN'S OV

Perplexed, but making a concession.

You take time, take a few days. You've just come

through a game and you're tired. Go to your ranch,
but think about it, Jonathan.

Bartholemew shifts again and the sculpture picks up his discord
and begins its tremor again.

And understand it. Do understand it. Because I
don't understand your resistance either and I don't
think anyone else will.

69. EXT. HILLTOP MEADOW DAY

Cattle grazing in the high grass. A jet copter appears on the
horizon, comes in low, passes over.

70. EXT. THE RANCH HOUSE DAY

Aerial shot of the modernistic ranch house as the jet copter
moves in.

71. EXT. RANCH HOUSE LAWN DAY

The jet copter settles on the lawn, cuts its engines. A bodyguard
runs from the house, opens the door of the copter.

Two guards emerge, then Jonathan. He starts toward the ranch house
and is met by Mackie. Arms draped around each other, they go toward
the ranch house.

72. EXT. JONATHAN AND MACKIE DAY

Slow zoom in. Voices rise as the camera closes.

MACKIE is one in a long line of Jonathan's playmates, but she has
been with him some months so a tenderness has developed between them.
She is large breasted, warm, not altogether shallow. She wears a
full-length transparent dress, goes barefooted.

Distressed, she tries hard for control at seeing Jonathan.

JONATHAN

-- and this is what we've been talking about.

You knew it was coming.

MACKIE

But I am upset, I can't help it. Are they just going to send me someplace else? Where'll I go?

They reach a stone patio and approach the door.

JONATHAN

Did you watch the game with Madrid?

MACKIE

Yes.

JONATHAN

I told you not to. You promised.

MACKIE

I couldn't help that either.

73. INT. MAIN ROOM, THE RANCH HOUSE DAY

They enter Jonathan's stylish house: white interior, low sofas, colored cushions, an assortment of electronic equipment. Inside the door, Jonathan drops his small flight bag and he and Mackie embrace. He allows a kiss on the cheek -- and she gives him a lingering and tender kiss there, her arms around his neck.

MACKIE

And Cletus is here. He's in the east wing. He

said that you sent for him.

JONATHAN

He's already here, good. Listen, I've got to talk to Cletus tonight. Can we have some supper and just relax?

MACKIE

Jonathan, I don't want to go away.

JONATHAN

Can we talk about it later? Can we relax for a few hours?

He smiles at her, puts his fist gently under her chin.

MACKIE

She manages to return his smile, sighs, consents with her eyes.

I'm glad you're all right. And I'll get some food ready -- and something to drink.

74. INT. GLASS BREEZEWAY DAY

Jonathan's house is spider-like: a series of wings connected by glass breezeways. He ties the belt to his kimono as he goes to meet Cletus. The afternoon sun slants across him.

75. INT. HALLWAY DAY

At the end of the breezeway, a hallway. Jonathan passes a door, looks inside as he goes by, stops.

76. INT. TROPHY ROOM DAY

CLETUS peruses Jonathan's many trophies. He is a huge man, about fifty years old, tanned and robust with gray hair. He turns as Jonathan enters.

77. CLETUS JONATHAN'S POV

He opens his palms, gesturing his dismay at all the trophies. Around him are glass cases, chrome and glass roller balls, crystal dishes, cups.

CLETUS

Know what I always said about trophies?

They're worth about as much as a roller ball referee.

JONATHAN

Returns Cletus' grin.

Come on, they're worth more than that.

He goes to Cletus and they clasp each other roughly behind the necks.

How're you, teacher?

CLETUS

Grasping Jonathan's shoulders and arms.

Great, great! Jonathan, you feel like steel cable!

JONATHAN

Poking Cletus gently in the shoulder and belly.

And you feel like a tub of warm executive butter.

They begin to laugh.

78. INT. MAIN ROOM, RANCH HOUSE

NIGHT

Laughter continues and rises. Cletus is carried away, wipes tears of laughter from his eyes.

They have eaten at a low table which is surrounded by cushions. Mackie wears another brightly colored transparency. Jonathan and Cletus both in kimonos now. On the table are several bottles and the remains of several chickens. Even Mackie laughs, but mostly at the men.

CLETUS

-- so I asked for some pills. Give me
some pills, I asked her.

He laughs again, then gets control and goes on.

The girl said, no, this is LUXURY corporation,
we don't dispense narcotics anymore. And I began
to raise another fuss.

Jonathan's shoulders bump with laughter.

I may not be an executive, I told her, but I know
my rights, the rights of all. Free pills!

Breaks into laughter again, manages to go on.

She says, no, you don't understand. Another
corporation gives out --

He just can't get on with it.

-- gives out pills now. That comes under the FOOD
corporation. You get them with your groceries!

Final laughter. He shakes his head in amazement.

79. JONATHAN, CLETUS and MACKIE

High shot panning around the three of them. Jonathan refills Cletus' glass. As their laughter settles, Jonathan motions to Mackie and she places a small silver box in his hand. Jonathan shakes it, rattling it like a box of dice, then empties the contents onto the table. Hundreds of pills of several colors spill out between them.

CLETUS

Oh me. I can't keep up with this horrible world anymore. Look at that.

80. CLETUS AND JONATHAN

Camera pans and drops as Cletus daintily chooses a pill, puts it on his tongue, and washes it down with a glass of wine.

CLETUS

Horrible. Vice and corruption.

JONATHAN

Still smiling fondly at his old friend.

Yeah, awful, isn't it?

CLETUS

And you know, I get the -- uh, I get the majors mixed up. I mean there's only five: ENERGY, FOOD, HOUSING, TRANSPORT and LUXURY. But I get mixed up on who gives us what. I mean, like where does music come from?

JONATHAN

Music?

81. JONATHAN, CLETUS and MACKIE

Jonathan looks over at Mackie, who is stretched out with a contented smile.

JONATHAN

You know who supplies the music now?

MACKIE

LUXURY used to. I don't guess I know.

CLETUS

And I forget what city belongs to what major.

Like Indianapolis and Chicago are FOOD cities, sure, but I went up to Philadelphia last month thinking, hey, this is going to be a city with a nice LUXURY center. But it was a HOUSING city. Dull.

82. JONATHAN AND CLETUS

JONATHAN

Nodding and smiling.

How old are you now, Cletus?

CLETUS

Old enough I shouldn't be looking for LUXURY centers, I guess.

He grins. Then grows nostalgic.

Over fifty, Jonathan. I've topped the hill. I

used to be this guy's teacher, you know, Mackie.
Oh me. I remember -- you ready for this, kids? --
I remember the last days of the National Football
League. And the World Cup in Europe. And -- before
the corporate police forces took over. And, well,
before there was even an executive class. Though there
was always one of sorts.

JONATHAN

What about the corporate wars? What do you know about
those?

CLETUS

Oh, nobody knows how it all actually came about. But,
listen, you were great: you remember your rookie year?
Whoo-ee! What was in that pill?

JONATHAN

That was a happy dream pill. You don't remember anything
about the corporate wars, really?

83. CLETUS

Drowsy, very nostalgic.

CLETUS

Oh, you were a great one. That game was made for you.

You were born to play it.

Wipes his big hand over his face.

And, you know, I suppose I don't miss playing roller ball. I know I was lucky to get out without getting bad hurt. And I'm an official now, I travel and see a lot of the teams, and I guess I don't miss playing exactly. Yet I get these feelings. I'm comfortable. Everyone is very comfortable, that's what things are about now, and I ought to be contented --

He looks at Jonathan, a look which asks if Jonathan could possibly understand.

84. CLETUS AND JONATHAN

JONATHAN

We've played the game and we know something others don't, isn't that right, Cletus?

85. INT. BREEZEWAY NIGHT

Jonathan and Cletus, arms around each other's shoulders. Cletus drowsy, but conversant. They slowly come toward the camera.

JONATHAN

You all right?

CLETUS

Sure, fine. That was a fine pill, though. I'm on the verge of being perfect.

JONATHAN

I have something to ask of you. That's why I asked

you here. You all right, you understand?

86. INT. DOOR FRAME JONATHAN AND CLETUS NIGHT

Jonathan opens the door to Cletus' bedroom. They look at each other. Cletus isn't so far gone that he doesn't realize the full importance of this.

CLETUS

I'm fine, I'm listening. What is it?

JONATHAN

I think -- listen, Clete, I think when we play the game we become the experts on pain. You listen to me here. We get aware of every bruise. We feel if there's a tiny little hurt inside our boot. If there's some signal our body gives us, we listen to it.

Cletus frowns slightly, but he's with Jonathan. A pause.

I don't think the game takes away feeling. It doesn't turn us into brutes. There's the funny part.

CLETUS

What is it you want me to do?

87. JONATHAN CLETUS' POV

JONATHAN

There's something going wrong. There's something

happening with the game I don't think I'm supposed to know about or understand. They want me to quit. And it's not that exactly, I may quit, I don't know. But what I want to know is why. That's sort of all I want.

88. CLETUS

Wipes a hand over his face again.

CLETUS

I'll keep my ears open. I learn about everything going on in the game one way or another.

89. JONATHAN AND CLETUS

JONATHAN

That's all I need right now. I don't think the executives'll tell me anything. You're an official.

CLETUS

I don't think there's anything you can do, if they want --

JONATHAN

No, look: no trouble for either of us. Just find out what you can.

Gives Cletus' shoulder a squeeze.

And get to bed.

CLETUS

I got to. And trust me, Jonathan. You
know you can.

JONATHAN

I know it, buddy. Get to bed now. Good night.

90. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM NIGHT

A dark room, then Jonathan opens the door and enters in silhouette against the shaft of yellow light.

91. INT. JONATHAN'S BED NIGHT

Mackie, lying on her stomach in the immense bed, raises up as Jonathan comes to the bedside. She is nude, waits for him without speaking.

He sits on the side of the bed. Unties his kimono, then stops.
Silence as he sits there staring out into the semi-darkness.

MACKIE

Jonathan, I don't want to be reassigned anymore.

Please, I want to stay.

JONATHAN

Short pause.

Come on, Mackie.

MACKIE

Does ENERGY want me to go? Tell me that. It's not
you, is it?

92. JONATHAN AND MACKIE

He sits there, waits. Puts his head in his hands. A rustle of sheets as she presses against his back and puts her arms around him.

JONATHAN

Mackie, yeah, it is me. I want you to go.

MACKIE

She hears this, waits, then lets her cheek settle onto his shoulder.

You care about me, I know you do.

JONATHAN

Another pause.

That's it. I just can't have anyone here like you and -- and still play the game.

He neither turns to her or looks at her.

We've had some good months. And this has to be all.

The camera trucks around them.

MACKIE

Tell me about Ella. The wife you lost. That's part of it, isn't it?

JONATHAN

Aw, I don't know, Mackie.

MACKIE

Tell me what happened. Tell me.

JONATHAN

Mackie, come on. Stop it.

He waits again, not really wanting to talk about this.

Look, they've told the story in the ENERGY newspapers over the years. She was more important than I was back then. I was going to be sacrificed, I was going to be wiped out like everyone else who played roller ball in those days. This was before the game -- before it developed.

Then, more bitterly.

They didn't expect me to last, see, Mackie.

93. JONATHAN AND MACKIE-

Close up. She draws his face toward her and they kiss. Then he gently breaks it off.

MACKIE

How long do I have here? Two weeks? Three?

JONATHAN

He won't look at her again.

Mackie, don't beg. Get out tomorrow. I just can't afford to think about you anymore.

94. EXT. HOUSTON TRACK DAY

Bright sunlight streaming around the stadium. Jonathan skates out onto the track as a group of ten Houston rookies take their places in the infield to watch his demonstration.

He turns and waves at a biker sitting on his motorcycle high on the wall about thirty yards away.

95. EXT. HIGH ON THE TRACK BIKER'S POV DAY

High shot. Jonathan waving below as the rookies settle into place.

96. JONATHAN

He skates down the track, turns, comes back before his class.

JONATHAN

Now all you rookies know the game: a runner has to field a ball and pass all the runners and skaters on the opposing team in order to score. So you know that when an opposing runner has hitched a ride with one of his bikers there's only one thing to do: you have to take on a bike -- man against machine, there's no other way.

He skates off a few feet, turns, glides back.

97. EXT. THE ROOKIES DAY

Slow pan across their young faces as they watch him. They are strong, tough looking, but in full awe and respect of Jonathan.

98. JONATHAN

Stops before them again.

JONATHAN

You know, also, that even when a biker isn't going for a score, he'll try and swoop down and pick you off. So we'll talk about ways to handle a biker here today.

Takes off his helmet, tucks it beneath his arm.

But I've got something else to say first. About faking injuries or not playing your best and meanest.

99. JONATHAN

Low shot, biker waiting on the track beyond.

JONATHAN

If you don't play all out, you kill your own team members. You help kill me and the top players -- in which case, in the long run, you kill yourselves. And in which case, we'd just as soon let you get it.

100. EXT. JONATHAN AND THE ROOKIES MOONPIE'S POV DAY

Moonpie comes out, strolling into the infield munching on an apple as Jonathan lectures.

JONATHAN

Now the bikers. One way, if you have the guts for

it: you can throw your shoulder right into the shield. That way you both go down, you probably get broken up a little, but it's necessary sometimes.

101. EXT. THE ROOKIES DAY

Jonathan's shadow falls across their awed faces as he moves in front of them again.

Beyond, Moonpie grins and chews on his apple.

102. JONATHAN

JONATHAN

Or you can hit the track, cover yourself, and let the biker hit you and flip over your body.

He makes this move, demonstrating. Then he gets up once more and resumes.

I don't recommend this. Better to be travelling yourself and hit the shield and sort of slide off while in motion.

103. EXT. ROOKIES AND MOONPIE JONATHAN'S POV DAY

Moonpie advances, stands near the rookies, throws the core of his apple down, grins with interest.

JONATHAN VO

Or you can skate along, feint, sidestep uphill, and kick the biker off the track as he goes by. This is Moonpie's best move.

MOONPIE

Enters into the discussion with his pleasant drawl.

I've practiced that beautiful move for three seasons now. Every time I do it I know the cameras are on me, everybody just loves to see me dropkick a biker.

The rookies turn, give him appreciative smiles.

Of course I'm up there in the air. Roller balls hit me when I come down. Runners stroll up and swat me. There's always a second biker trailin' along. So far I got myself three busted collar bones, one smashed elbow, a twisted neck, twice got ribs snapped, and one dirty bastard skidded over my face when my helmet came off.

104. JONATHAN

He smiles at Moonpie, turns, and signals the biker.

JONATHAN

But you watch, now. And remember: keep your speed, always stay a moving target. And at the last moment remember you have more mobility than the biker has.

105. EXT. HOUSTON BIKER DAY

He starts his bike and revs it up.

106. EXT. HOUSTON TRACK DAY

Jonathan skates, begins to pick up speed. The biker peels down the track behind him and gains on him.

107. EXT. JONATHAN SKATING BIKER'S POV DAY

The biker zeroes in on Jonathan.

108. EXT. JONATHAN AND THE BIKER DAY

As the biker closes on Jonathan, Jonathan feints, dodges the shield, grabs the biker's arm and separates him from his machine in one deft movement.

The bike skids away into the infield. The biker sprawls in pain.

109. JONATHAN

Regaining himself, he gets up and skates around the length of the track until he passes the rookies again. Speaks as he slowly glides by.

JONATHAN

Oh, yeah, yeah, I forgot about that move.

And the camera pans with him as he skates on by.

110. INT. AISLE IN THE LUXURY CENTER DAY

Jonathan and Moonpie step off a moving sidewalk and stroll beside a long line of clerks behind a counter. Jonathan is going someplace, Moonpie is just talking.

MOONPIE

Man, if there's anything I love it's the LUXURY

centers and the LUXURY catalogs. And when I
get my Privilege Card, I know what I'm going to
get, too: a secretary.

111. INT. SERVICE DEPARTMENT DAY

Jonathan grins as they move through a portal into the area
marked SERVICES. Another long counter, more smiling clerks,
as they walk by a sign which reads VALETS, HOUSEKEEPERS,
COOKS AND CHAUFFEURS: EXECUTIVES AND PRIVILEGE CARD HOLDERS
ONLY.

JONATHAN

A secretary? Why, you need to write some letters?

MOONPIE

I just need one. About this tall.

They pass into yet another area. The sign announces LIBRARY.

112. INT. LIBRARY, LUXURY CENTER DAY

Jonathan and Moonpie cross to a girl sitting behind a desk.
She rises and smiles as they come toward her.

Behind the desk is a computer. Otherwise this area is bare
with only a brightly colored rug.

GIRL

Can I help you, please?

JONATHAN

This is the library?

113. GIRL, JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

They face her constant smile over the desk.

GIRL

That's right, this is our circulation unit.
We have a wide selection of films and tapes.
You can make your choice here or by catalog.
Aren't you Jonathan E?

JONATHAN

Uh huh, look, though, what about books?

The girl and Moonpie exchange smiles.

GIRL

I thought he looked like Jonathan E! I watch
his games -- and you, you're, uh --

MOONPIE

I certainly am.

JONATHAN

I tried to order some books out of the catalog.
And I got a notice that I had to come to the
center personally.

GIRL

Her smile never alters.

There must be some mistake, then, because as you
probably know all the books have been transcribed
onto summarized tapes. For mass consumption.

114. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE GIRL'S POV

Jonathan rests his hands on the desk and gazes down for a moment considering this.

JONATHAN

Summarized? Who summarizes the books?

GIRL

Her voice is still bright.

I suppose the computer summarizes them.

MOONPIE

What'd you want books for?

JONATHAN

He smirks, steps back, turns in frustration, hands on his hips. Manages a laugh.

I want to study, Moonpie. You ever heard of that? I want to study up on some things.

115. THE GIRL

Smile intact, holding her ground behind the desk.

GIRL

You can go to the computer centers -- where the real librarians transcribe the books. But we have lots of interesting films and tapes. Anything I think you'd want.

116. JONATHAN AND THE GIRL

He takes a deep breath, tries hard to be kind.

JONATHAN

Let's see, then. You're not a librarian and
this really isn't a library and --

GIRL

I'm only a clerk, that's right, I'm sorry about
it, really, I watch you on Multivision all the time.

JONATHAN

-- and the books are really in the computer banks
being summarized.

GIRL

Yes, by the real librarians. There's a computer
bank in Washington. The biggest is in Geneva, that's
a nice LUXURY city, too, a nice place to visit.

117. INT. ESCALATOR DAY

Long shot of Jonathan and Moonpie coming slowly down an escalator
in an immense arcade. A few others in view. Camera zooms in
slowly.

JONATHAN VO

It's not that I'm mad exactly, no, but, yeah,
it happens to be important.

MOONPIE VO

But Jonathan: books. Anything you
want to know, you could hire yourself a professor,
see. Call up somebody. Use your Privilege Card.

JONATHAN

But I can't, that's it. -I might as well
tell you: there's something going on. They want me
to quit the game. Right now before Tokyo.

118. INT. IN THE ARCADE DAY

Long shot, Jonathan and Moonpie off the escalator walking toward
the camera.

MOONPIE

Congratulations. Go to your ranch and count the cows.

JONATHAN

I don't know why it isn't that easy. I just want to
know a couple of things first.

MOONPIE

They really want you out? Who told you? Bartholemew?

JONATHAN

Yeah, he did. And you won't believe this, but listen:
ten years ago they took my wife away from me. Just a
small executive maneuver. I didn't know until this how
much I resented it.

119. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

Zoom in close as they stop walking, turn, face each other.

JONATHAN

And that business about the books up there:
they want us wiped out one of two ways, see: they
want us killed like animals on the track or living
like animals off it.

MOONPIE

Breaks into nervous, defensive laughter.

You're Jonathan E! The clerks
know you, everybody knows you, you've got everything.
You know you'll get treated right, you always have been!

JONATHAN

Do we know that? Listen, we don't and you don't --

MOONPIE

I do know! We're living good, you know we are!

120. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA

DAY

The players in a violent uproar. Up before them on the stage
is the Team Executive, a sheet of paper in hand, both arms
raised as he tries to quiet them.

This area of the locker room is a small theater: a stage partially
surrounded by low white chairs and large cushions. Some players
are still seated or reclining on the deep rug, but others, including
Jonathan, are on their feet and loud. Beyond is a workout room with
shiny gym equipment.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

He has to yell out these first words to be heard as the players continue to bellow at him.

No, no, I don't know the reasons for the rule changes! I know what the executive directorate wants: it wants the playoffs --

FIRST PLAYER

Interrupts with a shout.

It wants us all killed!

Loud response from everybody.

121. TEAM EXECUTIVE

Sweating and exasperated.

I'm just up here, men, to remind you of one thing: you signed contracts again this year, you signed, every one of you, to play through the playoffs.

Uproar again. Cries of "Ah, you bastard!" and "Not with rule changes!"

So there's going to be three balls in play: you can handle that! The Tokyo team will have the same problem!

122. CONFERENCE AREA

Moonpie sits in a chair, his legs spread out, near the stage. His voice cuts through some of the noise.

MOONPIE

True, that's true! No way we can lose no matter
how they change the rules!

TEAM EXECUTIVE

All right; there's something else, too.
I haven't told you everything.

Groans from around the room.

123. TEAM EXECUTIVE

He looks at them with genuine embarrassment now.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

Three balls: all right, there's going to be three
balls in play. But the balls are going to be different,
too.

The players begin to hush.

Look, a lot of you know that in different games here
and there we've had -- uh, alterations in the game.
There was a game in Manila -- I know all of you heard
about it -- which was played with no time limit. And
I have to tell you that one thing being considered
for the playoffs -- it may still be under consideration --
is a no substitute rule.

The players begin to talk and groan again.

SECOND PLAYER VO

Come on, what about the balls?

124. JONATHAN

Standing there, hands on hips, shaking his head. When he speaks he gets everyone's full attention.

JONATHAN

Wait a minute, wait! All this is being decided at the highest level? The executive directorate from all the corporations? They're sitting around deciding how roller ball is going to be played?

TEAM EXECUTIVE VO

All I know are my instructions here to --

JONATHAN

I mean, we might like to know why. Is Houston supposed to lose this year? Or is it Multivision?

Not enough people looking in? All I'd like --

125. TEAM EXECUTIVE

Puts a palm up, goes on.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

I'd better tell you about the balls. They've designed a new ball. It's -- off-center. Not exactly round.

126. THE PLAYERS

Slow pan around their faces now. They listen in stunned silence, some of them with incredulous grins on their faces.

TEAM EXECUTIVE VO

It's almost round, it looks round. But it

well, it takes sudden jumps. Has an erratic

roll.

The camera stops on Jonathan's face. He isn't smiling at all.

127. TEAM EXECUTIVE

He looks at the sheet of paper in embarrassment, continues.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

I feel I ought to remind you that all other

recent modifications are still in effect. The penalties

for slow or conservative play are still in effect.

And we have the new balls here, gentlemen. I suggest

everyone get out to practice and watch them. That's

all --

He steps off the stage and walks off, his head down. The players erupt again, though, and he's surrounded with questioners before he gets far.

128. CONFERENCE AREA DAY

The chaos continues, players turning to each other. Loud complaints of, "We just won't play!" or "What is all this?"

129. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

As Moonpie rises from his chair, Jonathan is there in the crowd which mills around. They exchange a look, Jonathan's as if to say, "There, what do you think now?" But Moonpie shrugs casually.

130. INT. ENTRANCE TO TUNNEL. DAY

The Team Executive is still being questioned by a few players as he arrives at the entrance to a tunnel. Daylight shines from the far end.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

I don't know! How could I know that?

This won't be as bad as it sounds: you'll see the new ball at practice. There's going to be a lot of publicity, but it's just another game.

JONATHAN

He arrives on the outside of the group. Starts toward the Team Executive as the executive starts into the tunnel.

131. INT. THE TUNNEL. DAY

The two men in near silhouette as Jonathan catches up with the Team Executive. Jonathan speaks, but the executive won't turn around and keeps walking, waving him off.

JONATHAN

Wait a minute.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

Holding up a hand, waving Jonathan off.

Enough, enough, we all have our instructions.

JONATHAN

Catches him by the shoulder, stops him, turns him around.

You wait.

132. JONATHAN AND THE TEAM EXECUTIVE

In the sunlit glare of the tunnel entrance, they are face to face. The executive is angry at what he has just had to do, angry at Jonathan touching him, but Jonathan is fierce, too.

JONATHAN

All right. You know what I want: why is everyone else being pressured to play -- to stay with their contracts -- and I'm being pressured to quit?

TEAM EXECUTIVE

That ought to be clear! You think about that!

JONATHAN

His voice is almost a snarl.

Oh, no, you tell me.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

Disarmed somewhat now by Jonathan's fierce mood.

If you'd quit like you were told, maybe all this wouldn't be happening. You considered that?

Now Jonathan is momentarily dismayed himself.

Jonathan: get out. If you want to help the squad, do it.

He turns to walk away again, but Jonathan catches him once more and wheels him around.

JONATHAN

I'm not leaving the team to play Tokyo without me

-- not with all the new changes, especially --
if I don't get some explanations.

TEAM EXECUTIVE

Angry again and frustrated.

You've had your explanations! Let go of me!

He lurches away again and this time Jonathan doesn't follow.

133. JONATHAN

He turns, slumps against the side of the tunnel for a moment,
then starts back.

134. INT. LOCKER ROOM, GYMNASIUM AREA DAY

Jonathan comes in from the tunnel in long strides. The room
is empty, voices of other players leaving and shuffling out
in the distance.

He approaches a T dummy in the middle of the room: it revolves
when struck like an old gladiator practice opponent.

He gives it a solid shot with his fist, then ducks as it turns
and whips over his head.

Then he stands, lets it hit his shoulder and stop.

135. JONATHAN

He stares out, his mood settling. Gives the T dummy a gentle
shove as he gazes across the room.

136. EXT. ROLLING HILLS NEAR JONATHAN'S RANCH DAWN

Jonathan rides horseback in the morning mist. Goes at full
gallop.

Turns his horse down into a valley of tall cottonwood trees.

137. EXT. TALL TREES DAWN

Slows his horse, settles into a walk. A thoughtful moment for Jonathan as he passes beneath the limbs.

138. EXT. STABLE AREA EARLY MORNING

The sun is up, now, as Jonathan rides in, dismounts, hands the reins to a waiting groom.

He starts walking toward the ranch house.

139. EXT. DRIVEWAY EARLY MORNING

He stops at a sleek car, looks at the license plate. Then goes on across a patio and into the ranch house.

140. INT. MAIN ROOM, RANCH HOUSE DAY

He goes across the room, calls down a breezeway.

JONATHAN

Hello! Anybody here?

Goes to another breezeway.

Hey, hello!

Shrugs and goes back to electronic console.

141. JONATHAN AT THE CONSOLE

Dials a selection, flips a switch. Above the console on his multivision screens appear several images of Ella.

He pauses for a moment, looks at the images. One is a moving picture, the others stills. He presses a button which moves the live film onto the main screen.

142. INT. BREEZEWAY DAY

Goes down the breezeway, turns into another room.

143. INT. SMALL SITTING ROOM DAY

Jonathan steps inside the doorway, hits a button which turns on a single screen shot of Ella here, too. He pauses, looks, then leaves again.

144. INT. MAIN ROOM DAY

He crosses from one breezeway to another. On the main screen as he passes through is ELLA: dark, beautiful, walking in a field of high, wind-waving grass.

145. INT. BATHROOM DAY

Steps inside, hits a button which ignites a whole wall with the image of Ella walking in the open field. Again, Jonathan has a look, then moves on.

146. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

Same procedure: he hits the multivision button as he enters. Many moving images on the screen now.

He takes off his shirt as he watches. Switches the images around on the main screen again.

He hears a door closing. Turns, listens, hears nothing more, so forgets it.

Crosses to the bed, drops his shirt, disappears into his bathroom.

Ella's images occupy the room until he returns: she is with Jonathan, on screen, playing in the surf. In another shot they hug, kiss, and stick out their tongues at the camera.

He comes back into the room, glances at the images as he ties on a kimono. Then he looks over at the door with mild surprise.

JONATHAN

Hey, hello.

147. DAPHNE

She leans against the door frame: tall, blonde, pretty, yet a corporation girl: sexual, but with a certain toughness.

She wears a long diaphanous gown of the same sort Mackie wore, but a new color.

DAPHNE

Touching the gown, holding it out.

I found this to wear. Is it all right?

148. JONATHAN

He turns off the multivision images of Ella. As the screen goes blank, he turns to study Daphne.

JONATHAN

Yeah, I guess that's the uniform of the house.

149. JONATHAN AND DAPHNE

A pause while he looks at her.

DAPHNE

I'm Daphne. Didn't Mr Bartholemew say he was sending me?

JONATHAN

No, but it figures.

Daphne waits as Jonathan seems to be making up his mind. At last he sighs and smiles with resignation.

It's all right. Come on in.

150. INT. MULTIVISION STUDIO

Jonathan and Daphne sit in the semi-darkness of a multivision studio. Their faces are reflected in the dark glass of the control booth. Inside, the Director sits -- talking to them, but never making an appearance.

Daphne wears sun glasses and sits with her legs crossed. On the monitor are slow-motion shots of Jonathan in action against various opponents. These shots are also reflected in the dark glass and in Daphne's sun glasses.

DIRECTOR VO

These we did in slow motion. To show the impact of your blows on opposing players. This meets with your approval?

JONATHAN

Yeah, fine.

DIRECTOR VO

We want you to approve of all these sequences.

JONATHAN

It's all fine with me, anything. I don't really know why I'm needed here.

DIRECTOR VO

Well, the ENERGY people wanted you satisfied.

There, isn't that a nice shot?

On the screen Jonathan piles into an opposing player who is in mid-air after jumping over a roller ball.

Jonathan and Daphne exchange a look, raising their eyebrows at the Director's tone. Jonathan then replies to the echo-like voice.

JONATHAN

You must be a roller ball fan.

DIRECTOR VO

I like the statistics. Isn't that perverse?

151. JONATHAN AND DAPHNE

DAPHNE

You got anything I can take?

Jonathan passes her a small silver case.

JONATHAN

Try these. Better just take one.

As Daphne plucks a pill out of the case, Jonathan looks back up into the dark glass, addressing the Director.

Statistics, huh?

Mayhem on the monitor: a gigantic pile-up of skaters and bikers. All this without sound.

152. JONATHAN AND HIS IMAGES

Shot of Jonathan, the mirror of the booth, the monitor.

DIRECTOR VO

The greatest number of points scored in a single game: 81. The highest velocity of a ball when actually fielded by a runner: 156 miles an hour. Most deaths

in a single contest: 14, Rome vs. Pittsburgh, December 4, 2224. And the greatest number of players and substitutes put out of action in a single game by a single player: 13, world's record courtesy of yourself.

JONATHAN

I try, I try.

The spotlight over Jonathan's chair gradually brightens.

What's this?

DIRECTOR VO

You can just sit where you are, no problem.

153. INT. MULTIVISION STUDIO

A large camera unit glides into position on a track, aims itself at Jonathan. Slowly and noiselessly two additional pieces of lighting gear descend from the darkness above Jonathan.

DAPHNE

Toasting with the pill, then taking it.

Here's looking at you --

DIRECTOR VO

There've been studies, you know, about statistic freaks in roller ball. It has been established that many individuals go to the track, but never take their eyes off the statistic board and scoreboard.

Another spotlight increases: on a nearby table which has been obscured in darkness is a sheet of paper.

DIRECTOR VO

As for myself, I've always wondered about the players themselves, what sort of people they are. I read the gossip, the sports pages. But up until now I've never met one personally. And it turns out to be the esteemed Jonathan E.

JONATHAN

What is all this?

154. JONATHAN AND IMAGES IN THE GLASS

The replays of Jonathan in action continue: now he swoops down off the track and dives onto a passing bike, everything skidding away. Jonathan looks up into the dark glass.

DIRECTOR VO

I've wondered if the roller ball player thinks of himself as a class apart: not an executive, exactly, but a sort of wild, untamed sort?

JONATHAN

Am I being filmed?

DIRECTOR VO

You're supposed to read the release. Your retirement announcement. This is your special: it's already scheduled and expected all over the

world. Did you think you came here today just
to inspect your previous violence?

155. INT. MULTIVISION STUDIO

Jonathan crosses to the table where the sheet of paper is. On
his way he trips slightly on some cable and plugs on the floor.

DIRECTOR VO

Careful there.

Jonathan picks up the paper and reads it.

DAPHNE

What sort of pill did you give me? Were you
a bad boy?

JONATHAN

Stops reading.

Pure aphrodesiac, Daph. Enjoy yourself.

DAPHNE

Touches her temple, smiles drowsily.

My goodness, let's finish up here and go home.

DIRECTOR VO

Anytime you're ready. If you'll just sit back
down in front of the camera --

JONATHAN

Sits on the edge of the table, talks to Daphne now, ignoring
the business at hand.

You'll be all right. Feeling a little woozy?

DAPHNE

I'm all right. Why don't you read the -- uh, paper? Then we'll go.

JONATHAN

You want me to read the paper, too, Daph?

DIRECTOR VO

If you'd like, we can swing the camera back and get the shot behind the desk --

156. JONATHAN

He takes a step forward, crouches down. In front of him on the floor are the cables and power plugs. He still doesn't acknowledge the Director's voice anymore.

JONATHAN

How many assignments you been on for ENERGY, Daph?

You're good at what you're good at, so you must've been around some.

She doesn't reply. Silence.

DIRECTOR VO

Look, now. The special program is obviously the appropriate time for you to --

JONATHAN

He pulls the power plugs. The Director's voice and all the spotlights go off together. Then Jonathan continues to talk -- almost conversationally -- with Daphne. He remains hunched down, comfortably now, at ease.

A lot of ENERGY girls have come to stay with me, you know, Daph, I've never minded. We all work for the same corporation, we do our different jobs.

157. INT. MULTIVISION STUDIO

The piece of paper in his hand, Jonathan crosses to Daphne again. The monitor still runs: its images reflected in the glass of the booth and in Daphne's sunglasses once more. Jonathan speaks evenly -- but his malice seems just under the surface now.

JONATHAN

Odd thoughts I've had about you, Daphne. I've tried to think about you back in your hometown. I don't even know where it is. I've thought about your parents, that sort of thing. I've wondered if ENERGY briefed you on me.

DAPHNE

She begins to be afraid of him as he stops near her.

Jonathan --

JONATHAN

Very deliberately, he crushes the piece of paper in his hand.

I never have thought about you girls much, you know, Daph. Lots of things occur to me, though. Do many things occur to you?

158. JONATHAN

He is beside the camera. Rests his hand on it. Beyond, the monitor continues in the reflection of the booth. Daphne is standing now.

JONATHAN

There're a lot of things to consider, Daph,
really. And a few things to do. I've certainly
got to play Tokyo, I mean, there's that.

159. JONATHAN AND DAPHNE

She touches her head. Tries a smile.

DAPHNE

If I've done something wrong, I'm sorry. I
don't think I understand --

JONATHAN

You don't look so good, Daph. Terrible, in fact.
You shouldn't just take anything offered to you
like that. You didn't know what was in that pill,
after all, did you?

DAPHNE

Really confused and afraid of him now. She glances up at the dark glass of the booth. Tries her smile again.

What was in it?

JONATHAN

Well, there you are: you just don't know, do you?

160. JONATHAN

He stuffs the crumpled piece of paper into the lens of the camera. Keeps his look of quiet malice as Daphne looks on.

JONATHAN

There wasn't anything special in that pill,
Daph, nothing to hurt you. But maybe you're too
trusting, you considered that?

161. INT. LOCKER ROOM, GYMNASIUM AREA DAY

Jonathan works out with weights. Sweating, he stops and towels off. Players are moving through, passing into the conference area, and Moonpie arrives -- also sweaty and in partial uniform.

JONATHAN

How're ya, man?

MOONPIE

Feeling all right. I think the team's down, though.

They stroll toward the conference area together.

162. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

Players take their places below the stage, slumping in chairs or stretching out on the deep rugs or large cushions. Jonathan and Moonpie acknowledge some of their teammates as they take their places.

Two oriental instructors occupy the stage. Behind them are charts of the body with certain areas of the body marked in pink.

The instructors both bow and the Houston players give them listless scattered applause.

FIRST INSTRUCTOR

Please to be seated everyone. Thank you.

The two instructors smile politely and fold their hands in front of them as they await their audience.

163. MOONPIE AND JONATHAN

They drop onto cushions beside each other. Jonathan gives a fellow player a slap on the butt. Others grumble as they settle into place.

MOONPIE

We get this lecture every year.

164. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

We come again to demonstration of deathblows, gentlemen. You recall Tokyo players very skilled in use of these blows --

165. MOONPIE

He lets loose a Bronx cheer. The players erupt in laughter. And Jonathan, looking around, detects Moonpie's effect.

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

--and you will remember Tokyo team uses various karate and samurai techniques.

MOONPIE

He mimics the oriental's high-pitched voice.

MOONPIE

Also to recollect, please, three balls gonna be chasing those little bastards around track, same as old Houston team.

166. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

The room goes into loud laughter again.

167. ORIENTAL INSTRUCTORS

As the room howls, they maintain their smiles, yet aren't really amused.

168. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

The instructors finally ignore the noise and begin the lecture.

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

You will also remember there are certain body areas where skilled opposition endeavor to strike.

The first instructor points at various pink areas on the charts. This strikes everyone funny, too. The instructors maintain their composure.

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

Important consideration, all this: Tokyo team has eccentric playing style, as you will recall.

MOONPIE

His drawl is in sharp contrast to the instructor.

Houston's got its peculiarities, too.

The Houston team is changing from general lethargy, now, to amusement. Laughter continues, whistles.

On the stage the first instructor is now going through warmup maneuvers as the second instructor tries to continue.

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

Please, to pay attention. Instruction this week to include vital defensive and offensive --

169. MOONPIE AND JONATHAN

MOONPIE

What you do is this: you drive the jawbone up into the ganglia.

More laughter.

JONATHAN

The what?

MOONPIE

Getting into the spirit of it now, he gets to his feet.

The goddamned ganglia. Mass of nerves right here under the ear. You drive the jawbone up into that mess of nerves and it rings a bell.

The room howls. Jonathan urges Moonpie to the stage.

170. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

Moonpie is urged and pushed toward the stage by his team. The instructors still, only slightly amused. A few players begin the familiar chant: "Hou-ston! Hou-ston!"

171. MOONPIE AND THE INSTRUCTORS

The second instructor tries to regain attention as Moonpie lurches onto the stage. Finally the room quiets down slightly.

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

Yes, ganglia: interesting. Many such

essential nerve areas we need to review --

Moonpie, hamming it, points under his ear and winks. He gets a loud response from his teammates.

The first instructor wheels and stops in a defensive position. Moonpie notices, jerks a thumb at him and shakes his head.

SECOND INSTRUCTOR

He bows low to Moonpie and everyone applauds.

You have, please, information or comment

to offer?

The team encourages Moonpie.

172. JONATHAN

He leads the team in the chant again. It reverberates around the room and finally dies in laughter and applause.

173. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

Moonpie raises his hands to quiet the crowd, but only partially succeeds as he starts the lecture himself.

174. MOONPIE

The oriental instructors behind him, Moonpie holds up his gigantic fist.

MOONPIE

What we got is the old Houston fist-in-the-face.

175. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA MOONPIE'S POV

Bedlam again as they respond to Moonpie. Finally, he raises his arms to quiet them as the second instructor steps up to him.

176. MOONPIE AND THE INSTRUCTORS

They exchange words as the players continue to yell. Moonpie finally consents to square off against the first instructor.

Just as they are set to start, Moonpie halts the action. Turns again to his appreciative audience.

MOONPIE

The old fist-in-the-face technique!

Loud approval. Again, the chant starts up and continues through the next sequence.

177. MOONPIE AND THE FIRST INSTRUCTOR

Again, they square off. Moonpie drops his fist to the floor, ready to throw a haymaker. They circle each other.

The instructor leaps, kicks Moonpie down. Moonpie gets up grinning. Bows to the instructor.

Next, the instructor moves inside. Moonpie misses with a fierce swing and takes a vicious chop to the neck.

The team is still chanting and loud as Moonpie raises his hands once more. When things have died down some, he addresses the first instructor.

MOONPIE

Listen here now, you do that again and I'm not gonna let you lecture anymore.

Moonpie grins good naturedly amidst the hilarity now. Only the instructors remain the least serious over all this.

178. JONATHAN

He throws his head back in laughter.

179. MOONPIE AND THE FIRST INSTRUCTOR

They circle each other again. The second instructor smiles with confidence.

Moonpie lowers his fist, the first instructor feints, lunges, lands a blow, falls back.

They circle again. The room is still boisterous.

Another leap, the first instructor flies at Moonpie, and Moonpie connects. The blow sends the instructor through the charts onstage.

180. INT. LOCKER ROOM, CONFERENCE AREA DAY

The players mob Moonpie and congratulate him. Jonathan ruffles Moonpie's hair as the chant begins again.

181. INT. JONATHAN AND DAPHNE NIGHT

Harsh overexposure as they dress in the glare of their bathroom lights. Daphne is at the mirror painting her face. She wears a loose gown, her breasts exposed.

Jonathan brushes his teeth with a small electric brush, watching Daphne as he does it. She paints silver streaks around her eyes and down the sides of her face, a silver dot below her mouth. As he finishes brushing his teeth, she shoots him a glance. They are at a stand-off in their relationship, not affectionate.

182. JONATHAN

Zips up his jump suit and begins placing his Spanish hat on his head.

Small multivision receiver glows beside him. Daphne gives both the multivision program and Jonathan a look of boredom.

183. DAPHNE

As Jonathan looks on, she paints her nipples silver, too.

She puts on a diaphanous evening garment. Affixes a jewel on her naked shoulder.

Jonathan studies her through all this with more curiosity than pleasure.

184. INT. EXECUTIVE HOUSE NIGHT

Jonathan and Daphne moving through a noisy party on this evening of his worldwide special program. Executives and teammates say hello and touch him as he passes.

The house is a maze of glass, mirror, and vari-sized multivision screens. Early in the party these bear still images of Jonathan. Then, as the special begins, the screens come alive with slow-motion images and action shots of Jonathan on the track.

The executives wear black, the women wear various evening clothes, and Jonathan's teammates wear variations of ENERGY orange.

A languid music covers the evening.

Jonathan and Daphne enter an area where couples are dancing. The dance is simple: foreheads together, the couples move their bodies slowly on each other without footwork. Moonpie strolls up.

185. JONATHAN, DAPHNE and MOONPIE

Daphne peels away from Jonathan and Moonpie and goes over to an admiring group of executives. Jonathan and Moonpie look at each other in silent greeting, raise their eyebrows, smile.

186. INT. BUFFET NIGHT

Cletus takes a mouthful at the buffet as Jonathan and Moonpie appear. Jonathan raps Cletus playfully in the stomach.

JONATHAN

How's your main muscle, Clete?

CLETUS

Breaking into a wide grin.

My main muscle is still pretty hard. Now
this here --

Pats his stomach.

-- I've developed a layer of protective
blubber over the steel fiber inside. How're
ya, Jonathan?

JONATHAN

Playfully slips Moonpie's hand away from some buffet tidbits.

All right, doing all right. What've you
learned? Anything?

CLETUS

Dropping his smile

Learned plenty. I'm surprised this multivision
special is going on schedule. I'm surprised you're
playing the last games, that you haven't announced
your retirement, and that we're all here at a party
as if nothing's going on.

JONATHAN

Well, what'd you hear?

Three executives invade the buffet. One of them grabs Jonathan's
hand and shakes it, interrupting. Cletus' smile returns and
Moonpie exits.

FIRST EXECUTIVE

Jonathan E: Let me grab the hand of the man
who drops the foes of Houston --

Smiles all around as the executives talk to Jonathan and Clete
and grab a few bites of food.

187. INT. CLUSTER OF GUESTS NIGHT

Moonpie passes a group of executives and women spread out on
pillows. A crystal bowl of brightly colored pills is going around.

FEMALE GUEST

The thing is, roller ball players aren't real.
They're androids. Fake men. The whole game is
played by robots that look exactly like men and
bleed, didn't you know that?

188. MR BARTHOLEMEW

Appears in the doorway. Several executives meet him and pay him
extreme deference, hands on his back, handclasps. He is looking
around the party.

189. INT. DANCERS, MAIN ROOM NIGHT

Couples in a sensuous therapy dance. One girl, dancing with a
player, begins to bring her legs up around his body.

190.. EXT. THE EXECUTIVE HOUSE NIGHT

Foreground: black limbs of trees swaying in a rising night wind.
Beyond, the house glows with light and sounds of music and laughter
come from it.

191. MOONPIE, HOUSTON PLAYER, BEAUTIFUL GIRL

Moonpie and a teammate both watch a beautiful girl stretch and yawn. She looks at both of them invitingly after she finishes and they both move toward her from separate places.

Glass and mirror separate the three of them. She moves, removing her image from their grasp. After several maneuvers the two men bump into each other and the girl escapes.

MOONPIE

At last, dumb head, you found me.

192. INT. JONATHAN AND MACKIE NIGHT

Jonathan drops down beside Mackie on some cushions. Her head is back and she's gone in euphoria. Jonathan greets her with a tender kiss on the cheek.

MACKIE

Looking up at him, raising her eyes slowly.

Oh, Jonathan, nice. I'm glad you did that.

JONATHAN

How're you, Mackie?

MACKIE

Puts her arms around his neck.

This is your night. You want it to be your night, Jonathan?

JONATHAN

I'm glad you came.

193. MACKIE JONATHAN'S POV

Eyes half open, she smiles at Jonathan. From a distant room comes a roar of voices.

MACKIE

I think your show is on, Jonathan. You've got them all excited again --

She drops back on the pillows.

I came with an executive tonight. He asked about you. He wanted to know if I enjoyed you --

194. JONATHAN MACKIE'S POV

She traces a hand across his cheek as he watches her. He is about to speak, but the cries of the partygoers erupt again.

195. INT. MAIN ROOM NIGHT

Several screens of varying sizes throw Jonathan's image into the party. From here on, all party action takes place before a backdrop of roller ball images.

A central group of guests applaud and cheer as the program begins. On screen, Jonathan skates toward the camera.

196. BARTHOLEMEW AND DAPHNE

Standing close to each other, they exchange words over the roar of the crowd watching the multivision special.

197. INT. DANCERS NIGHT

Before a backdrop of Jonathan and his teammates laughing after a victory, two dancers move and touch in a nearly naked rhythm. The screen shifts images: Jonathan sending a vicious backhand blow into an opposing skater. The two dancers entwine in a kiss.

198. CLETUS AND EXECUTIVES

Beside a gigantic console which controls the multivision images throughout the house, Cletus tries to enter a conversation with two ENERGY executives. He is never admitted to their discussion. The roar of the crowd on screen dominates.

199. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMEW

Close up, they talk: the first tentative sparring of the evening. The party rages around them.

BARTHOLEMEW

You know I've always considered your situation, Jonathan, and your needs. Now you have to consider mine -- and ours.

JONATHAN

Waits for nearby noise of partygoers to settle.

Well, I guess I'm doing for your situation what you've always done for mine, then, Mr Bartholemew: I'm considering it.

200. BARTHOLEMEW

Takes a breath, tries to be patient.

BARTHOLEMEW

You say you want to understand what's going on. Knowledge, Jonathan -- it either converts into power or it converts into melancholy.

He waits, confident that Jonathan is listening. Gauges Jonathan's reaction, goes on.

And which could you possibly want? You have power: status and skill and the whole masculine dream. And in roller ball there's no room for melancholy, no room. You don't want to get hung up in -- uh, the mind's things. No one wants that.

201. JONATHAN

He puzzles with this, shakes his head.

JONATHAN

But that's it, Mr Bartholemew. Power: I don't think I've ever really had any -- or have any now.

Stares at Bartholemew.

Do I? Do I, Mr Bartholemew?

202. EXT. TERRACE, EXECUTIVE'S HOUSE NIGHT

The camera trucks around the circumference of the house. Through the glass and an occasional open door the party is glimpsed.

The wind is up. Dark limbs. Sounds of tinkling glasses and a burst of laughter.

An anonymous girl stands alone on the terrace. As the camera passes, her face is scanned: she has been sobbing and stands out here in the night with tears streaking her face.

The roar of a group watching multivision. They sit around the console inside

203. INT. MULTIVISION CONSOLE, MAIN ROOM NIGHT

A sequence of roller ball concludes and an executive reaches over

and presses a button which blurs the screen as it spins back to replay.

SECOND EXECUTIVE

All right! Let's see that one again!

The sequence starts again as the group voices approval of a replay. On screen, Jonathan jumps on with one of his own bikers and they overtake an opponent's motorcycle. As they pass, Jonathan kicks the opposition off the track.

Jonathan passes the group as the sequence concludes and a girl, laughing with delight, reaches out for his arm as he goes by. He nods at the group, manages a smile as they greet him and call their approval of the action on screen.

204. INT. DANCERS NIGHT

Jonathan pauses in passing and watches Daphne dancing with abandon among all the others. A rhythmic session of touching: bodies beginning to grind together.

205. JONATHAN

He watches, taking this in. He registers a subtle disgust.

206. DAPHNE DANCING

She rides the thigh of her partner, a young executive. Slowly undulates against him.

207. INT. GLASS HALLWAY NIGHT

Jonathan edges by a crowd in the hall. Moving on, he passes Moonpie and a fat executive.

208. MOONPIE AND FAT EXECUTIVE

FAT EXECUTIVE

All right, what I want to know is this: how do they get you ready for a game. Psychologically,

I mean. How do they get you ready to play?

MOONPIE

Well, I don't know about the others, but
sometimes they feed me a live mouse.

209. INT. SMALL STUDY : NIGHT

Jonathan comes into the empty room, closes the door, shuts out the music and all sound except that coming from a small multivision unit behind the desk. He leans against the door, sighs, watches the continuing mayhem on the set for a moment. The crowd chants his name.

210. JONATHAN

Still leaning against the door. Reaches over, presses a button on the wall, turns off the set. Sound and light fade.

211. INT. SMALL STUDY : NIGHT

Jonathan observes the room briefly. A desk, shelves which contain tape and film. A model of the solar system. He turns as Cletus enters.

212. JONATHAN AND CLETUS

CLETUS

He closes the door behind him, sighs, begins.

All right. All I know is that whatever's going on
doesn't concern the Houston team as a whole. It's not
a matter of keeping the team from winning again.

JONATHAN

Trying to fathom this.

Then why me? Why do they want me out?

CLETUS

Don't know that either, but they want it bad. As far as I could find out, it goes all the way up to the executive directorate above Bartholemew. He was told to get the announcement of your retirement on this show tonight.

JONATHAN

Then why'd they even let the show go on after I refused?

CLETUS

I think -- it's delicate for them. The show was scheduled all over the world. Listen, it's hard finding anything out, you know that! I mean, hell, nobody even knows the names of the men on the directorate anymore!

213. JONATHAN

An awareness in his face. Walks around the desk, touches the model of the solar system. Muses aloud.

JONATHAN

Nobody even knows the names of the men on the directorate.

I guess that's right, I don't know any.

Looks up at Cletus.

Why'd you play roller ball, Clete? At the beginning,

I mean. Why'd you start out playing?

214. JONATHAN AND CLETUS

CLETUS

Grins, doesn't exactly understand.

I don't know, Jonathan. Rewards. I survived.

I got the good life from it.

JONATHAN

But you would've had all the comforts anyway.

CLETUS

Yeah, but you know: I got into the luxury categories.

JONATHAN

You ever want to be famous, Clete?

CLETUS

Puzzles over this, grins, still doesn't fully comprehend.

Oh, naw: I played for what I got. Uh, maybe like you said, because some of us liked to hit.

Looks at Jonathan, thinks of the question.

But fame, no. That's not a game for fame, is it? I mean, a player usually only lasts a few seasons and not many players --

215. JONATHAN

Pauses there beside the solar system model.

JONATHAN

One player got famous, Cletus. He lasted. He's been famous now for five or six years.

Deep in thought now, he reaches in and touches the sun in the model of the solar system.

216. INT. MAIN ROOM EARLY DAWN

Couples lying around as the first hint of the sun comes up. Music lingers. From a distant room: a few voices rise in a tired cheer. Camera pans to this group.

217. INT. MULTIVISION CONSOLE EARLY DAWN

The group are still replaying Jonathan's feats on the screen. Mr. Bartholemew moves through them saying goodbye. Two bodyguards with him, one of whom holds his coat.

THIRD EXECUTIVE

Standing at the console, he calls to Bartholemew.

Don't go yet. We're running some more replays!

Bartholemew smiles, waves, but allows his guard to help him into his coat.

218. EXT. TERRACE DAWN

A few executives and their girls stroll outside. Mood of exhaustion. One of the executives carries a long-barrelled pistol. Faint music.

219. EXT. SHOT THROUGH TERRACE WINDOW DAWN

Moonpie in the embrace of two girls. Delirious expression on his face. Their dance is virtually stopped -- just a small and subtle movement occasionally as the faint music continues.

Beyond, in the reflection of the window, partygoers can be seen strolling onto the lawn beyond the terrace.

220. INT. MULTIVISION CONSOLE DAWN

Executives and girls begin to leave. Jonathan is still on the screen, moving through plays without audio. Faint party music still drifts through the house.

Jonathan and Bartholemew wait as the guests trickle away. A girl holds up one of the long-barrelled pistols as she files out.

GIRL WITH A PISTOL

Come outside and play, you two!

BARTHOLEMEW

Put that thing away.

Turns to his guards.

Get her out of here with that.

Then turns back to Jonathan.

Dangerous. I don't like dangerous toys.

The guards usher out the last of the group and then depart themselves. Bartholemew steps over to the console, fingers the controls, presses a button. A replay begins. He presses another button which puts everything on slow motion. A slow pileup of bodies and machines on the track.

221. BARTHOLEMEW

Runs his hand over the console, looks at Jonathan.

BARTHOLEMEW

No player is greater than the game itself,
Jonathan. It's a great game, an important
game, significant: the velocities of the
ball, the physics of the track, that ball whipping

around those boards under the power of its centrifugal force, the machines the bikers ride, and in the middle of it all men, little men, really, all of them, playing by an odd set of rules.

He comes toward Jonathan, smiles.

It's not a game a man is supposed to get strong in. You appreciate that, don't you?

222. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMW

JONATHAN

I appreciate everything more and more, Mr Bartholemew.

BARTHOLEMW

Then you must take good advice: you're not to play against Tokyo, you're not to play at all.

JONATHAN

I want some concessions.

BARTHOLEMW

Losing patience, snapping at Jonathan.

Concessions! Believe this, Jonathan, I'd be happy to talk a deal, I love deals. But the situation is much, much simpler: this multivision event tonight

was very embarrassing, it was embarrassing for me and for others.

223. JONATHAN

Looks at Bartholemew, speaks evenly and without emotion.

It may be that I won't ever find out why I'm being asked to get out just now,

but I know I can get some concessions and I want them.

224. EXT. LAWN OUTSIDE EXECUTIVE'S HOUSE DAWN

A stream of wary guests file across the trimmed lawn now. Girls in diaphanous clothing and various stages of undress. Executives walking as if adream -- and, like a few of the girls, some of them carry the pistols.

The morning breeze is up. They pass across the lawn and enter a field, the high grass moving in the wind.

225. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMEW

The powerful slow-motion image of Jonathan swooping down the track is the backdrop.

BARTHOLEMEW

You want to keep your luxury privileges, is that it? That might be arranged, Jonathan, it might be. But you can't go to Tokyo.

JONATHAN

I want to see Ella, Mr Bartholemew. My wife, my former wife. I want it arranged so I see her again.

226. BARTHOLEMEW

BARTHOLEMEW

That's an old concern of yours, I realize,
Jonathan, I know it was an unhappy situation
between you and your wife and ENERGY at the
time, but it can't be easily --

JONATHAN VO

I want to see her again --

227. JONATHAN

JONATHAN

-- and I want other concessions, too, Mr
Bartholemew.

228. EXT. FIELD BEYOND EXECUTIVE'S HOUSE EARLY MORNING

The partygoers, still euphoric, approach a stand of tall trees,
the branches rattling in the breeze.

BARTHOLEMEW VO

Corporate society was an inevitable destiny.
Man accomplished what he craved: a world of
comfort, few sacrifices, a material dreamworld.
The good life, a centuries-old dream: why rebel
against it?

229. BARTHOLEMEW

Low shot, Jonathan's image still dominating the screen behind

him. Bartholemew is at the console, idly turning the dials and getting other shots on the slow-motion replay. Jonathan, on screen, swoops down the track.

BARTHOLEMEW

And look on the surface of all this: what you're bargaining for is the right to stay in a horrible social spectacle. Roller ball: it has its purposes, you've served those purposes brilliantly, but why argue when you can quit?

230. JONATHAN

He gazes out the window. Bartholemew reflected in the glass. The partygoers wander into the distant field.

BARTHOLEMEW

And you say you want to understand why decisions are made. Your future comfort is assured, you don't need to know. Why argue with decisions you aren't powerful enough to make for yourself? And ENERGY will treat you well, you know that --

231. EXT. MACKIE DAY

Mackie, the sun behind her and shining through her transparent dress, stands in the high grass. Lovely, drowsy, legs apart, she sets herself and raises a fire pistol. She takes aim.

232. EXT. FIELD AND TREES DAY

The pistol in Mackie's hand flashes slightly and a large tree

on the edge of the field bursts into flame. The executives and girls watch as a mushroom of fire goes up.

233. JONATHAN

Still gazes out the window, his jaw set.

JONATHAN

If the rule changes remain, Mr Bartholemew,

I'm playing with my team. I won't leave them to that.

234. EXT. JONATHAN SEEN THROUGH TERRACE GLASS DAY

Jonathan turns around as Mr Bartholemew, losing his temper, shouts an indistinguishable reply. The fireball in the field is seen in the reflection of the glass. Another explosion follows.

235. BARTHOLEMEW

Still standing below the action scenes on multivision.

BARTHOLEMEW

Too late! The rule changes are scheduled and announced, just like the special program here. There's no going back. You've seen to that.

236. JONATHAN AND BARTHOLEMEW

JONATHAN

Then I'll go to Tokyo! And I want to see Ella!

And I want answers, I deserve them --

BARTHOLEMEW

You can be made to quit! You can be forced --

237. EXT. DAPHNE AND YOUNG EXECUTIVE DAY

Held in the arms of a young executive who helps her aim, Daphne fires at the trees.

238. EXT. FIELD AND TREES DAY

Two more trees explode and burst into flame as the executives and girls stand and fire.

239. EXT. HIGH GRASS DAY

In the field, laughing, a pretty girl staggers with a fire pistol in her hand. It goes off and cuts a swath of fire through the grass, just missing some of the other partygoers. They jump aside without much care, some of them smiling.

240. EXT. LARGE TREE DAY

Another tree explodes with flame.

241. INT. MULTIVISION CONSOLE DAY

Jonathan and Bartholemew both shouting. The images on screen remain behind them.

JONATHAN

You can't make me quit!

BARTHOLEMEW

Stay in the game and die, then! The rules are gone, they'll be all gone, and all of you will go with them if you don't get out!

JONATHAN

It won't work! I won't leave my teammates, they depend on me!

BARTHOLOMEW

And don't tell me I can't, don't ever say that.

I can! You can be stopped!

242. JONATHAN

Moves to the console, turns a dial and gets a shot of the crowd chanting his name. The audio comes up and fills the room.

JONATHAN

Oh no. If you could've stopped me, you would've
already --

243. MONTAGE

A holocaust of fire in the stand of trees: explosions and fireballs as the partygoers continue to shoot.

Bartholomew stares at Jonathan as the chant echoes around them.

Mackie stands alone, pressing her fingers into her temples as the fire rages.

The multivision screen: Jonathan's name continues to ring from the adoring crowd as he circles the track in triumph.

The executives and girls stroll back toward the executive's house.

As Mr Bartholomew's guards return, Jonathan walks away.

The wind spreads the fire through the high grass.

A fiery limb breaks and falls off a burning tree.

244. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

Jonathan packs a leather flight case. His uniform and clothes on the bed. His bodyguards move around picking up other bags and clothes. Daphne comes in wearing her travelling outfit, a beige jumpsuit and scarf.

DAPHNE

It's going too fast. I'm not all packed!

Can't you ask your men to --

JONATHAN

You're not going.

She stops, looks at him, but he turns to two of his guards.

Don't forget the helmets. Here, give me those gloves, I'll put them in here.

A guard gives him a pair of playing gloves: heavy leather weapons with metal studs. Jonathan drops them on the bed beside his case as the captain of his guard comes in.

GUARD CAPTAIN

Excuse me, sir.

245. JONATHAN, DAPHNE, CAPTAIN

JONATHAN

Is everything ready?

GUARD CAPTAIN

Yessir, but I've had a call. I've been asked to go over to ENERGY.

JONATHAN

You won't be going to Tokyo?

GUARD CAPTAIN

I suppose I will later, sir. Michaels will be in charge until I join you. I've already spoken to him.

JONATHAN

What'd they want with my guard captain? You ask them?

GUARD CAPTAIN

No sir, it was just a secretary giving me the message. I hope this isn't an inconvenience --

JONATHAN

Pauses only briefly to think about this.

No, no problem. Just see the gear is in the coptor, all right?

Turns to look at Daphne again as the captain nods and leaves.

DAPHNE

I'm supposed to go with you --

246. JONATHAN AND DAPHNE

He stops, looks at her.

JONATHAN

What's that mean? Who told you you're supposed to?

DAPHNE

Nobody told me --

JONATHAN

He slams everything else in his case except the gloves.

That's a lie.

He turns and stalks off into the bath room.

247. JONATHAN

Comes out, pauses in the frame of the bathroom door, a few toilet articles in his hands.

JONATHAN

You know, I've always wondered about the girls
ENERGY loves to supply me with. I've always
wondered --

Disappears back into the bathroom.

248. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

Jonathan comes out, dumps toilet articles into the bag.

JONATHAN

-- if all of you are spies? If you write up
little reports late at night after you've finally
rocked me to sleep?

DAPHNE

Tries to laugh this off, turns away from Jonathan, pays elaborate
attention to her scarf.

Don't be ridiculous.

JONATHAN

Packs everything except his playing gloves.

Well, how does it work, then? You know, is it
like a secretarial pool? How'd you get picked for
me? Were we matched by a computer?

He goes back into the bathroom again.

249. DAPHNE

She fidgets, uncertain of how to handle the situation.

DAPHNE

I really want to go with you, Jonathan.

JONATHAN VO

You know how it happened in the old days, Daph?
People sort of met by accident. They married and
lived with each other for a long time.

250. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

He comes back in with a last item for his bag.

JONATHAN

They had children and lived with each other for
years. Did you have parents, Daph? I didn't, not
really. I was an orphan, raised by the ENERGY people.
Fattened up and trained to do my job. Did you see
that part on the documentary? It was all right there
on multivision, how I was always taken care of by the
corporation and how I played roller ball when I was
fourteen years old. You see any of that show the
other night?

Daphne stares across the room, doesn't know what to say.

251. GLOVES ON THE BED

Jonathan goes over and checks the closet beyond the bed and pulls out three helmets. Brings them back to the bed, holding them.

JONATHAN VO

I don't think you watched my show the other night and I don't think you care about things one way or another, do you, Daph?

DAPHNE VO

That isn't true.

JONATHAN VO

You got your skills, Daph, I give you that much, but it occurs to me -- I get the feeling --

He drops the helmets on the bed.

-- that you're always thinking about something else when you're around me. Like I'm an assignment.

252. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

A guard appears in the doorway and Jonathan -- with a burst of impatient fury -- throws the helmets across the rug toward him.

JONATHAN

I said get the helmets! So here: get them out there!

The guard gathers up the helmets and scurries out again. The outburst turns Daphne away again, so she stands with her back to Jonathan, facing camera, eyes wide.

253. JONATHAN AND DAPHNE

JONATHAN

Gathers himself again.

I mean, Daph, really, is it all just a matter of jobs and commodities? Am I your job? And what're you, Daphne, are you somebody's reward? My reward? You consider yourself that?

DAPHNE

Still turned away, but stung now.

You'd better do what you're told, Jonathan, that's all I have to say.

JONATHAN

Stands there with the gloves poised above his flight case.

Hey, a warning. They tell you to give me warnings?

DAPHNE

Leave me alone!

JONATHAN

Can you take an assignment from me and get out of here before I come back?

DAPHNE

You won't be back, you bastard --

242. JONATEAN AND DAPHNE

Closeup as he grabs her in a single swift move. He crushes her face close to his, holds her from behind, and brings the studded glove against her cheek. His voice is barely controlled.

JONATEAN

Oh, you bitch, never try to scare me, you don't know how. Don't ever try.

She gags, but doesn't dare speak. He takes a deep breath, controlling himself.

I'm through with rewards, let me tell you. I don't play the game for rewards anymore --

She tries to utter his name, but he grips her.

Now you go back to ENERGY and tell those people I'm going to Tokyo and you're not. And take a small present to them, too, can you do that for me?

Tightens his grip.

All you corporate people like to deal in fear and pain, but you don't know how. I'm the one who really knows. You take them a little fear and pain --

He pulls the sharp stud of the glove across her cheek. The cut begins to bleed and she sobs with fear.

255. EXT. JONATHAN'S LAWN DAY

The coptor waits on the pad. The motors come to life. A guard runs out of the house with Jonathan's flight case and passes it to another guard inside the coptor. Then Jonathan and two

other guards emerge from the house and start walking toward the pad.

256. EXT. JONATHAN FLANKED BY TWO GUARDS DAY

Sound of the motors as they move out toward the pad.

JONATHAN

You've got all your instructions, then?

Got my schedule?

MICHAELS

Yessir, have it all from the captain.

They walk on, Jonathan thinking.

257. DAPHNE AT THE WINDOW

She watches Jonathan and the guards proceed toward the coptor. Holds a handkerchief to her cheek.

258. EXT. THE COPTOR DAY

Shot under its wheels as the three men advance.

JONATHAN VO

Michaels -- both of you -- let me ask you something. Who do you think you're protecting me from?

MICHAELS VO

The crowds -- in the cities and at the games.

259. EXT. COPTOR PAD DAY

As the three men arrive, Jonathan slows, stops, turns to them.

JONATHAN

No, not the crowds. The crowds like me.

They're always friendly, you've seen that.

Even in a foreign city -- even when Houston wins!

The three look at each other. They try to read his eyes.

Now think about that. Think about it and
keep alert.

He turns for the coptor, then turns back.

Help the captain to think about it, too.

260. JONATHAN AT THE COPTOR

Going inside, he stops again. Shoulders fall. Odd look in his eyes now as he turns to Michaels once again.

JONATHAN

Tell you what, send the rest of the guards and
equipment in the coptor here. Be sure my gear
gets to the track in Tokyo.

Steps away from the coptor, puts an arm on Michaels' shoulder
and turns him aside.

261. JONATHAN AND MICHAELS

JONATHAN

I'm going to travel with the team this time.

Get the car and take me to join the team, all
right?

Michaels looks at him, comprehends his suspicion. Sound of the
coptor motors.

262. INT. WATER IN BATHHOUSE POOL DAY

Transition from the sound of the coptor's motor to the sound of filter and bubbles. Beyond this low water-level shot in the bubbles, Moonpie, Jonathan and bath attendants at the far end of the pool.

263. INT. TOKYO BATH HOUSE DAY

Camera trucks across the water toward Jonathan, Moonpie, and girls. Sound of Jonathan's voice as he sits at poolside reflecting. Splashing water, too, and the giggles of the girl attendants.

Moonpie is in the water waist-deep, surrounded by three giddy attendants who are soaping him. His arms are raised and he grins, only partially listening to Jonathan. Two less excited girls attend Jonathan, rubbing his back and shoulders with oil. At last Jonathan's voice becomes more distinct in the sounds and echoes of the bath.

JONATHAN

The thing about Ella leaving me was this:

I accepted it.

264. MOONPIE AND GIRLS

He nods as Jonathan speaks, tries to listen, but the girls are great distractions.

JONATHAN VO

I mean, ENERGY wanted it and she wanted it,
so there wasn't much resisting her leaving me.

MOONPIE

Trying hard to stay in the conversation with Jonathan.

You loved her a lot, I know that.

265. JONATHAN AND GIRLS

He motions that the rubdown should end. The girls smile and

stop. Jonathan ponders how to answer Moonpie. Pensive and reflective.

JONATHAN

I think I loved her. When she was with me I
felt things I can't even remember how to feel
now. That make any sense?

266. MOONPIE AND GIRLS

They rinse him off and this becomes a splashing water fight
and wrestling match. Finally he breaks away from them and wades
to the side where he pulls himself up. Jonathan's two attendants
wrap him in a large towel.

267. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

The girls dry Moonpie as Jonathan continues to muse aloud.

JONATHAN

For instance, sometimes you just think you recall
the good things. When I was an orphan at the ENERGY
care center I had my cocoon -- that's what they
called it. It was also called a Sensitivity Cradle.
It was my bed, see, but it also moved and caressed me.
Velvet on the inside and warm.

Moonpie looks at Jonathan grinning.

We had those cocoons instead of nurses.

Jonathan shakes his head, remembering. Moonpie stretches out on
his stomach at the pool's edge as the smallest attendant rubs him.

268. JONATHAN

Gazes into the water. Light shimmers on his face. A trace of a smile, still.

JONATHAN

I've been touched all my life -- either
caressed or bashed. I don't think I've felt
much one way or the other. That's why I would
like to see Ella again -- to see what happens.
You with me?

269. MOONPIE

Eyes closed, he wears an ecstatic grin. The girl continues
massaging his back and shoulders.

MOONPIE

Hmmm --

270. JONATHAN AND GIRLS

One of the attendants offers to rub Jonathan's back some more,
but he waves her and the others off. Speaks in a bare whisper.

JONATHAN

Go on now, go on.

They rise, wrap themselves in their kimonos, make their bows,
and exit. Jonathan looks back at Moonpie.

271. INT. POOLSIDE DAY

Jonathan dangles his feet in the pool. The girl attending Moonpie
lays down on his back and both of them close their eyes.

JONATHAN

Doing all right, there?

MOONPIE

Drowsy, manages to open his eyes only for a moment.

I'm listening, I hear you. People have
been laying their hands on you --

272. JONATHAN

JONATHAN

I don't like to talk about myself, it's
unmanly, I've always felt that way, and for
another thing if you think about yourself
much these days you have to put too much
together: here I am, what am I doing this for,
where has history gone, how do the corporations
figure in? All that. Nothing's simple. You
start out, say, you want your own way, you don't
think you're unreasonable, and everything suddenly
has to go back to Greek civilization, the rise
and fall of the religions, the nature of man,
damn, I don't know what all.

Looks over at Moonpie again.

273. MOONPIE AND GIRL JONATHAN'S POV

Moonpie's mouth is dropped open in sleep. The girl still
asleep on Moonpie's back. Jonathan turns, continues musing.

274. JONATHAN

Gently kicks the water, gets up, towels himself off. Still thoughtful.

JONATHAN

The hard part is finding out just how things work and why. Oh me, I think I'll go to a computer center, really, Moonpie, maybe they still have all the books stored someplace.

275. JONATHAN, MOONPIE and GIRL ATTENDANT

Jonathan s'rolls over, lies down with them on towels. Props his head on the girl's rump and closes his eyes. Pause.

JONATHAN

Finding things out: that's the thing.

Opens his eyes, gazes out. Moonpie and the girl are fast asleep. Jonathan drowsy, contemplative.

True, I know more about myself. They can't make me quit because I'm too well known, I'm trouble for them that way.

276. BATH HOUSE POOL

The filter bubbles away in the water. Sunlight slants in from the windows.

277. JONATHAN

JONATHAN

Opens his eyes' again, still unable to drift into sleep.

Oh, god, you start thinking about yourself
this way, Moonpie, it never stops. You have
to consider the whole awful world.

Last pause. Sound of the water filter and Moonpie's breathing.
Jonathan reaches back and pats the girl atop Moonpie.

Hey, nice. I think we've got ourselves a
friend here.

278. INT. HOTEL LOBBY DAY

A smattering of applause as Jonathan, Moonpie and other
Houston players come down the lobby stairway into a crowd of
reporters. Electronic gear everywhere: cameras whirring and
clicking, portable tape machines running. In one corner of
the room, a multivision console. The oriental reporters bow,
everyone hustles to get to Jonathan.

Beyond the lobby, outside, a larger crowd awaits the emergence
of the team. The lobby itself is filled with illuminated
furniture and sculptures.

ORIENTAL REPORTER

Will Houston defeat the Tokyo team tomorrow?

JONATHAN

Both teams have fine players and different
styles. What'd you say, Moonpie?

MOONPIE

Aw yeah, but it's not an even match.

279. MOONPIE

He grins as everyone turns his direction.

MOONPIE

It's not even, see, because the Tokyo team has
all these little short guys.

280. INT. HOTEL LOBBY DAY

Everyone laughs and scoffs, mostly in a doubtful good mood.
The entourage manages to move a few feet, but the throng of
reporters stops it. Cameras juggled, many questions again.

281. JONATHAN AND REPORTERS MOONPIE'S POV

2nd ORIENTAL REPORTER

What about the rule changes? What about having
three off-centered balls in play at once?

JONATHAN

Just more points scored that way.

MOONPIE

If we can catch a few of those lopsided things.

More laughter. The conference picks up energy now and the
reporters close in.

282. JONATHAN AND REPORTERS

BLACK REPORTER

Then rule changes don't matter to you?

JONATHAN

No, not much. The Houston team plays a wide-open
system in which we protect each other.

He reaches back, throws an arm around the neck of one of
his teammates.

HOUSTON TEAMMATE

We protect Jonathan and Moonpie and they
play against the other team!

More laughter.

EUROPEAN REPORTER

Will you comment, though, about playing in
a game in which the rules are always altering?

283. INT. HOTEL LOBBY MULTIVISION MONITOR OV DAY

Jonathan seen on screen and with the reporters.

JONATHAN

Roller ball is a game and -- a war. It's always
had rule changes. They don't effect the good teams.

The reporters all respond at once.

REPORTER I

REPORTER II

But three balls at once! Off-centered balls, come on!

284. JONATHAN, MOONPIE and REPORTERS

ORIENTAL REPORTER

What about the referees?

JONATHAN

The referees? Same as always: they're comic
relief out there in the infield.

Howls of laughter from everybody.

Don't get me wrong. So far not many players

have been shot or stabbed out there playing
-- oh, a few, maybe, not many. That's because
we have the good referees on duty.

More laughter as the players make another effort at moving
toward the door.

2nd EUROPEAN REPORTER

Is it true that ENERGY corporation provides
you with special women?

JONATHAN

Shoots the questioner an evasive grin and speaks as moving
away.

Define your terms --

This gets a response, too. Mostly laughter.

285. MOONPIE AND REPORTERS

3rd ORIENTAL REPORTER

You great new player. What's the secret of your
success on roller ball track?

General laughter now as the group anticipates Moonpie's response.

MOONPIE

It's no secret: I'm kept beautiful by plastic
surgery.

The laughter explodes again.

Now some people think it's just the executives,

who're basically ugly as a group, who
use plastic surgery and the new cosmetic
change-your-face. But under here --

He pinches his cheek for the reporters.

-- I'm not getting any prettier playing
this game. And you take Jonathan: he puts on
his face like a glove, he's all scars and bruises.

More appreciative laughter.

286. MULTIVISION MONITOR

A view of Jonathan and the next questioner.

2nd BLACK REPORTER

There're rumors the last game of the season
will be played without substitutions. Any
comment?

287. JONATHAN AND 2nd BLACK REPORTER

JONATHAN

Well, I don't think it'll come to that. It's
still a game --

288. INT. HOTEL LOBBY NEAR THE DOORWAY DAY

The crowd beyond the door begins to call and wave. Jonathan
and the players make little progress getting outside, though.

289. JONATHAN AND REPORTERS

2nd ORIENTAL REPORTER

There is further rumor: some say you are soon retiring from the game.

JONATHAN

Here I am.

BLACK REPORTER

Did you enjoy yourself in your recent multivision special?

The group moves into the doorway with this question and the shouts from outside rise.

290. MOONPIE AND REPORTERS

As everyone moves through the doorway, a last question.

2nd ORIENTAL REPORTER

Houston team is playing Tokyo with notorious samurai style. You think you will win?

MOONPIE

Raises a fist.

Gonna hit 'em right in the ganglia!

2nd ORIENTAL REPORTER

Where?

291. EXT. HOTEL DOORWAY DAY

The reporters and players disgorge into a frenzied crowd. The chant begins: "Jon-athan! Jon-athan!" The bodyguards try to form a phalanx, but the crowd is too mighty.

292. JONATHAN IN THE CROWD

The guards are thrown aside and Jonathan is soon alone in a crowd which clearly honors him.

Hands reach out and touch him, smiles everywhere, as the chant continues.

293. EXT. TOKYO HOTEL DAY

The street overflows with an adoring throng. Jonathan and -- shortly afterward -- Moonpie are lifted in chairs. The chant thunders now, picked up by others as Jonathan is lifted into view. Banners and fireworks.

Jonathan shrugs helplessly at his guards, signals to Michaels that this is all right.

The chant carries over into the coming game.

294. JONATHAN AND TEAMMATES NIGHT

They stand on the Tokyo track, loosening up, but their eyes are all turned to the Tokyo team which has taken the track.

The chant alters into a long cheer for Tokyo as the Houston players stare. Jonathan puts on his gloves, Moonpie shakes out his arms and legs.

295. INT. TOKYO TRACK NIGHT

The Tokyo team moves in a slow circle around the track as the tempo of the crowd builds to a frenzy.

The pack, riding and running in close concert, bikers and skaters guarding the runners, strikes out its arms so it becomes a human porcupine. Several quick synchronized arm thrusts.

296. INT. HOUSTON TEAM IN THE GLARE OF LIGHTS NIGHT

The players watch solemnly.

297. THE TOKYO RUNNERS NIGHT

Using their paddles like samurai weapons, the three gigantic Tokyo runners go through a series of ballet-like maneuvers. The crowd roars its approval with each subtle move.

298. THE HOUSTON TEAM ON THE TRACK

The team moves onto the track, one by one, then forms a pack with Jonathan and Moonpie leading.

Sound of the cannon and the crowd roars as the game starts.

299. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

The off-centered ball leaps sideways, smashes into the restraining wall, goes into the air, comes back down the track.

300. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE SKATING

Moonpie turns to Jonathan and utters an oath as a ball whizzes by them, bounding like rubber. Sound of other firings.

Jonathan signals a warning and another ball speeds by. Then Jonathan signals his team to pick up the pace.

301. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Long shot of the two teams on opposite sides of the track circling. The bikers are high on the wall like birds of prey. Another cannon fires, keeping three balls in play.

302. HOUSTON BIKER

A direct hit by a roller ball separates a biker from his motorcycle high on the track. As he tumbles down the track, the Tokyo pack overtakes him. He tries to run into the infield, but two skaters catch him and drop him with karate blows.

303. TOKYO CROWD

One of the off-centered balls leaps the wall and plows into the crowd. Hysterical screaming and a clamor to get back from the restraining wall.

304. HOUSTON PLAYERS

A Houston runner manages to field a ball. Immediately a Houston biker is there to give the runner a lift and Moonpie waves his team on: they will attempt the first pass.

305. TOKYO PACK

Skating slowly and defensively, they watch as the Houston scoring unit of skaters and ball carriers approach.

As the Houston group nears, the Tokyo pack drops off one of their runners. He smiles and awaits the Houston players.

306. TOKYO RUNNER IN ACTION

He feints and drives his paddle into the first Houston skater who tries h.m. Deftly, he takes out another -- then his own biker moves in, takes him on, and returns him to the Tokyo pack.

307. TRYING A PASS

The Houston biker with a runner and ball aboard tries to pass the Tokyo pack, but two Tokyo bikers move up the wall, too, to intercept. A cat-and-mouse game above and behind the moving pack: the Tokyo bikes keep swerving in front of the Houston biker and runner. A Tokyo runner, club ready, sits on one bike.

308. MOONPIE

He skates to the top of the wall, looks, picks up speed, and heads down toward the slowly moving bikers.

309. MOONPIE AND TOKYO BIKERS

Moonpie, skating faster than the bikers now, swoops down and collars the runner sitting on the back of the Tokyo bike. It tumbles into the Tokyo pack, men sprawling everywhere, and the Houston team scores during the pile-up.

310. THE PILE UP

A broken field now, men scrambling. The Tokyo team tries to re-group. Two skaters try to get to Moonpie, but Jonathan skates in, shouldering one of them into the infield.

311. THE STAT BOARD

The score: Houston 1, Tokyo 0.

312. BROKEN FIELD

Men scrambling up from the pile. A Tokyo biker tries to start his motorcycle again. Finally it turns over. Before he can get going, though, Moonpie skates by and inserts a broken paddle into the spokes of the front wheel. As the biker attempts to drive off, the wheel comes apart.

A Houston runner raises his club, but before he can strike a ball thunders down on him and hits him in the back, carrying him off.

313. JONATHAN

He catches a blow to the face. Dazed, he keeps skating -- a trickle of blood from his nose and mouth.

314. SUBSTITUTIONS

From the infield, after getting a Houston bike out of play, another roars onto the track. Cannons continue to fire.

315. INT. CURVE OF ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

The crowd screams as the Houston pack, re-grouped now, skates around the curve. Then, following, come two bouncing roller balls. The pack disperses as the balls rumble by, then forms again.

316. BIKERS COLLIDE

A Houston and a Tokyo bike collide and spin out of control into the infield where they burst into flame. Bodyguards, referees, players scatter from the explosion.

317. JONATHAN AND TOKYO SKATER

Hand-to-hand combat as they skate beside each other. Finally Jonathan ducks a blow and shoves the skater into the path of a Houston bike which sends him sprawling.

318. WAITING FOR A LIFT

A Tokyo runner fields a ball and waits for his biker to come pick him up. The biker arrives, the runner begins to get aboard, but a Houston biker swoops in and knocks him out of play.

319. FIELDING ANOTHER BALL

A Tokyo runner fields a ball and the pack gathers around him. They start off at a hard pace, determined to score.

320. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

Skating together, they lead the Houston pack. Jonathan looks back, sees the Tokyo pack coming, signals to Moonpie.

MOONPIE

I see 'em! Hey, Jonathan!

JONATHAN

Still skating, looks at Moonpie.

What?

MOONPIE

You like games, Jonathan?

JONATHAN

Takes another look over his shoulder at the approaching Tokyo pack. Looks back at Moonpie, tries a smile.

Yeah, I love games.

321. TRACK AND INFIELD

The packs rumble by. In the infield, a Houston player sits with a bone protruding from his arm. Sound of cannon and a backdrop of smoke from the bike crash.

322. PACK AGAINST PACK

The Tokyo pack reaches the rear of the Houston pack. They

begin to merge and fight. Karate blows and use of the paddles. In the middle of the Tokyo pack, protected, sits a runner on the rear of a bike, waiting for a chance to score with the roller ball tucked in his paddle.

323. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

Still leading the Houston pack, they take on the Tokyo bike as it tries to break through and score. Jonathan is struck by the bike, but pulls the runner off as it passes. Moonpie kicks the bike a second later and it swerves and spills. Both Jonathan and Moonpie manage to regain their balance and skate on.

324. STAT BOARD

The score remains the same. Other categories flash: Players Out of Action, 17 / Dead, 1 / Bikes Destroyed, 6.

325. TOKYO CROWD

They raise a chant of "Go! Go!"

326. MOONPIE AND TOKYO SKATER

Moonpie skates along with a headlock on a Tokyo skater. As he goes he manages to loosen the player's helmet, then delivers a crunching uppercut into the man's face. Lets the player drop.

327. OPPOSING BIKERS

A Tokyo biker cleverly crowds a Houston biker high on the track where the balls come out of the cannons. The Houston biker takes a direct hit from a ball.

328. THE ASSIST

Jonathan brakes to a stop over a fallen Houston skater. Helps him to his feet. The player's helmet is off, spinning on the track, and Jonathan picks it up and uses it as a club. Two opposing Tokyo skaters roll by, both taking shots at Jonathan and his teammate. Jonathan lands a solid blow on the second one.

329. MIDAIR BLOW

A Houston runner jumps a ball whizzing at him. While still in midair, he takes a blow from the paddle of a Tokyo runner.

330. AMBUSH OF JONATHAN

Two bikers descend on Jonathan. He faints and manages to slip one of them, but the other catches him and knocks him down.

331. JONATHAN

On the track, he scrambles to get up. The skate has come off his skate boot and he reaches out for it. A Tokyo skater comes by and kicks the skate down the track. Jonathan manages to get into the infield, tags a substitute who hurries onto the playing surface.

JONATHAN

Yells, points to his boot, begins unzipping it.

Hey! Need help here!

332. MOONPIE AND TWO HOUSTON SKATERS

They glide around a curve, Moonpie gesturing ahead toward the Tokyo pack.

333. TOKYO PACK

Bunched together again and moving, they once more drop off their samurai-style runner. He smiles as he waits.

334. MOONPIE AND TEAMMATES SAMURAI RUNNER'S POV

Moonpie and the other two Houston skaters approach. One of them skates up the wall, the other two head directly for the runner with Moonpie in the lead.

335. JONATHAN AND ATTENDANT

Jonathan is out of his skate boot, trying to pull on another one. Michaels, the bodyguard, stands above Jonathan and the attendant. Jonathan watches the action. Sound of cannon.

336. MOONPIE AND THE SAMURAI RUNNER

As Moonpie skates down on the Tokyo runner, he misses his roundhouse blow and takes a terrific shot from the runner's paddle. Skids away and the runner leaps after him, delivering another blow.

337. THE PILE UP

A distracting pile up of skaters, bikers and runners as the two teams merge and fight. The crowd screams.

338. MOONPIE AND TOKYO RUNNERS JONATHAN'S OV

Jonathan is not far off the track where the two Tokyo runners now have Moonpie helpless.

339. JONATHAN

He breaks away from the attendant, his boot still not in place, and struggles toward Moonpie.

340. DEATH OF MOONPIE

Moonpie's helmet is jerked off. The Tokyo runner delivers a heavy deliberate blow as Jonathan lurches in.

Jonathan grabs the feet of the runner who struck Moonpie, pulling him down, but the other runner beats Jonathan away.

341. THE CROWD

The chant of "Go! Go!" resumes, the frenzy rising.

342. SPILLING OVER

Two Tokyo spectators jump the barrier. One of them runs along in excitement around the top of the track and the other tumbles down the embankment as two skaters whiz by.

343. THE INFIELD

Attendants and bodyguards pull Jonathan and Moonpie back to safety.

344. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

Jonathan rests a hand on Moonpie's bloody frame as an attendant zips on Jonathan's skate boot. The chant of the crowd still dominates.

345. BODYGUARDS

The guard captain points out a man high on the track. Two guards remove their pistols.

346. SPECTATOR HIGH ON THE TRACK BODYGUARD'S POV

Aiming carefully, the bodyguard removes a hazard from the track.

347. INFIELD

Taking another look at Moonpie, Jonathan fastens his helmet and skates back into action.

348. JONATHAN

Camera trucks with Jonathan as he skates -- almost dazed, slow to recover his awareness. A Tokyo skater passes him and takes a shot at him which Jonathan slips with a kind of unconscious reaction.

He rejoins the Houston pack. Skaters and bikers -- with runners aboard -- acknowledge him, but mainly they're glancing behind at the gathering attack of the Tokyo team.

Jonathan skates beyond his own pack, moving out as if adream.

349. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Jonathan picks up speed, leaves his pack. He begins to circle the track -- until finally it becomes clear that he is coming up behind the Tokyo pack, lapping the field.

350. JONATHAN AND THE SPECTATOR

Another spectator on the track, dancing for the crowd as Jonathan comes around the corner at him. Before the spectator can escape, Jonathan swerves into him and shoulders him into the infield.

351. TOKYO AND HOUSTON PACKS

Camera trucks beside the two packs as Tokyo overtakes Houston trying for a score. Jonathan approaches the rear of the Tokyo pack skating hard.

Surprising the trailing skater, Jonathan collars him and tosses him into the infield.

At the front of the Tokyo pack, the skaters engage the Houston team.

352. JONATHAN VS. TOKYO BIKER AND RUNNER

Jonathan overtakes the biker and ball carrier. The runner tries to fend him off, but Jonathan manages to get the ball loose from the webbing of the paddle. Skating just out of the reach of the runner astride the rear of the bike, Jonathan heaves the ball and knocks the motorcycle over. It skids into the pack causing a pileup.

353. DODGING ANOTHER BIKER

A second biker bears down on Jonathan, but Jonathan sidesteps and the bike plows into the Tokyo players.

354. JONATHAN AND HOUSTON PACK

The Houston pack skates on, the Tokyo team's scoring effort wrecked. For a moment Jonathan skates with the Houston team, then stops and goes back. Skates the opposite direction toward the Tokyo team.

355. JONATHAN AND SAMURAI RUNNER

The samurai-style runner waits, paddle ready. Jonathan comes with such speed, though, that the runner's blow doesn't land. A vicious tackle and they both go sprawling.

356. JONATHAN ASTRIDE SAMURAI RUNNER

Astride his unconscious opponent, Jonathan looks up at the carnage around him. Seems to breathe a great sigh of resignation. Then draws back his deadly glove and backhands the runner.

357. STAT BOARD

The crowd attacks the stat board which reads, still, Houston 1, Tokyo 0. Sparks fly as the lights go out on the board. The chant of Jonathan's name resumes, fists in air, as the stat board begins to sway.

358. INT. TOKYO TRACK NIGHT

The stat board falls in a shower of sparks, the crowd continues to scream and chant, as the track is strewn with players and bikes. Only a few Houston players still move around the track.

In the infield, the bodyguards surround Jonathan as he moves downstairs. Smoking ruins of the bike crash. Covered bodies.

359. EXT. BUDDHIST TEMPLE NIGHT

Overgrown temple grounds, a gigantic Buddha toppled on its side and illuminated by floodlights. Jonathan pacing slowly, head down. He moves in front of the Buddha, stops. Total silence.

360. JONATHAN

He pauses, tilts his head sideways to look at the Buddha.

361. EXT. JONATHAN IN THE TEMPLE PAVILION NIGHT

Ruins of the temple beyond the toppled Buddha. Jonathan walks in silence.

362. EXT. TREE BESIDE WALKWAY NIGHT

Jonathan looks up, listens. A small prayer wheel, stuck in the branches of a tree, makes its noise in the gentle night wind.

363. JONATHAN AND BODYGUARDS

As he walks, his guards come in from the shadows and join him. At last he looks up. Then he strides away.

364. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR NIGHT

Jonathan strides down the hallway toward a waiting oriental doctor.

365. JONATHAN AND DOCTOR

The doctor bows low. Raises up, smiles.

DOCTOR

Let me say, first, please, that you played a superb game in our city.

He continues to smile, but Jonathan is impassive.

Come inside, please.

They turn and enter a room off the corridor.

366. INT. INTENSIVE CARE ROOM NIGHT

Moonpie occupies the center of a white room in which a single spotlight falls on his body. Tubing in his mouth, arms, legs. A respiratory bag fills and empties with his breath as he lies there. Electrodes attached to his brain and wrists. His body, swabbed red, is in sharp contrast to the room.

Jonathan and the doctor arrive at the edge of the spotlight's glare. Sound of the breathing apparatus. The doctor picks up a small clipboard from the table beside Moonpie.

DOCTOR

A simple problem, yet I know it is difficult for you.

Jonathan looks at all the gear, finally into Moonpie's face.

Your teammate has no family we can contact and permission is required, now, before -- ah,

before consummating matters.

367. JONATHAN AND DOCTOR MOONPIE'S POV

Jonathan looks carefully at Moonpie as he responds.

JONATHAN

So he's actually dead? Just a vegetable?

DOCTOR

Yes, unfortunately. His heart and lungs will function, but his brain is -- ah, it has expired. From the first minutes we had him it was hopeless. I believe this was explained to you.

Jonathan touches Moonpie's arm. Continues to observe him.

JONATHAN

He's warm.

DOCTOR

Yes, but please: if you will, please, you must sign a release form. It is required.

368. INT. TABLE WITH MOONPIE AND TUBING NIGHT

Camera trucks around Moonpie, Jonathan and the doctor. Jonathan pauses, continues to look with fascination.

JONATHAN

Does he -- you know, does he dream?

DOCTOR

Smiles with sympathy, then looks over at Moonpie.

No, there is no brainwave at all, no
sort of consciousness. Just a deep coma.

Watches Jonathan gaze at Moonpie.

You see, just a vegetable -- as you yourself
remarked. No dreams, nothing.

JONATHAN

Gazes at Moonpie, then strolls a few paces away, thinking.

But, you know, even a plant may be --
well, aware of itself, right?

DOCTOR

Who can say? Please --

He gently presents the clipboard to Jonathan.

369. JONATHAN

Strolls back to Moonpie, peers into his friends face, speaks
as if musing aloud.

JONATHAN

A plant senses life. It turns toward the
sun. It feels -- something.

DOCTOR VO

You must sign --

370. JONATHAN AND THE DOCTOR

Low shot through the tubing which surrounds Moonpie.

JONATHAN

No, just leave him as he is.

DOCTOR

Someone will have to sign. There's no other way --

JONATHAN

Arrangements will be made.

DOCTOR

Please, there are hospital rules --

JONATHAN

No, there aren't any rules. There aren't any rules at all.

371. EXT. LOADING APPARATUS DAY

Whine of the loading device. A large transparent bubble encases Moonpie. Bright sunlight. His chrome bed and elaborate tubing is being moved inside a giant coptor.

372. EXT. LANDING PAD DAY

Jonathan and Cletus watch Moonpie's bubble being moved inside the coptor.

Jonathan wears his Spanish hat, jumpsuit. Cletus yells and points, overseeing the transfer. Beyond is Jonathan's coptor on another landing pad -- and his guards.

The bubble finally eases inside and the doors of the large coptor slide closed.

373. JONATHAN AND CLETUS

They stroll away, going toward the landing pad where Jonathan's coptor awaits.

CLETUS

Don't worry, I'll find out everything I can.

JONATHAN

I haven't heard anything else from Bartholemew, but if they wanted me out of the game before I guess they still do.

CLETUS

Watch out for yourself, Jonathan --

JONATHAN

Nods back over his shoulder indicating Moonpie.

And thanks for this, Clete, I mean it.

Cletus nods solemnly.

374. EXT. LANDING PAD, JONATHAN'S COPTOR DAY

Cletus and Jonathan stop before reaching the guards.

JONATHAN

If there're any troubles with Moonpie's arrangements, let me know. And when you have any news for me, come out to the ranch.

CLETUS

Touches Jonathan's shoulder.

Do what I told you and get some rest now. Will you do that for me?

JONATHAN

Clete, I don't know. I think I'll go back in the past a little. Think that can be done?

CLETUS

Maybe. But I was already there once and things weren't much better.

The two men give each other a light slap on the arms and Cletus turns and goes back toward Moonpie.

375. JONATHAN AND GUARD CAPTAIN

The guard captain stands ready as Jonathan arrives at the coptor.

JONATHAN

Everything ready for home?

GUARD CAPTAIN

Yessir, all ready.

JONATHAN

He pants, gives the captain, the guards and the coptor a long look.

Tell you what, we're going to have another change of plans.

Jonathan and the captain exchange a knowing look. Jonathan smiles.

We're going to have lots of changes of plans, captain.

His smile broadens, as if he is getting in control.

376. EXT. WINDOW AT JONATHAN'S RANCH DAY

Shot from outside in the rain. Jonathan inside talking on phone.

377. INT. MAIN ROOM NIGHT

Jonathan sits watching Multivision without audio. The game: Peking vs. Cairo. Tray of food nearby.

378. JONATHAN

He looks up indifferently, begins on the food.

379. INT. MAIN ROOM NIGHT

The food all gone. Restless, he gets up and switches pictures, sits back down.

380. MULTIVISION SCREEN JONATHAN'S OV

Ella on screen. At first, still shot of her laughing. Then the screens show varying moving shots of her with Jonathan.

381. JONATHAN

Settles back to watch her. Looks away and shakes his head.

382. INT. MAIN ROOM LATE NIGHT

Jonathan asleep, his arm dangling, as images of Ella continue.

383. INT. BREAKFAST ROOM DAY

Jonathan eating alone, sitting there stiffly. Takes the last of his coffee. A guard comes and stands in the doorway, Jonathan rises, and they both go out.

384. EXT. PATIO DAY

Jonathan goes out, steps over puddles of water. Stands at the edge of the patio where he can view his empty landing pad.

385. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

Gets into his jumpsuit. Goes to the mirror, can't decide how to wear it -- zipped or unzipped? Begins to comb his hair. Not contented with it, either.

Walks away from the mirror, turns, practices a smile. Comes back and re-combs his hair. Then a small bulb on the console nearby turns red, he sees it, straightens his suit once more, leaves the zipper halfway undone, and goes out.

386. EXT. PATIO AND LANDING PAD BEYOND JONATHAN'S POV DAY

Stands waiting in the doorway as his copter settles onto the pad. His guards out there waiting in attendance. Jonathan turns.

387. INT. DOORWAY DAY

Jonathan decides to wait inside, comes in, closes the door behind him.

388. INT. WINDOW, COPTOR BEYOND DAY

Jonathan watches from the window as Ella emerges from the copter. A guard points the way to the ranch house and she comes toward Jonathan. He turns, zips up his collar once more, smooths his hair once more. Turns to face the door. Zips down again.

389. INT. DOORWAY DAY

Ella comes through the door with the sounds of the copter's motors and the guards, beyond, calling about luggage. An abrupt face-to-face meeting. Surprise in her eyes.

390. JONATHAN AND ELLA

ELLA

Oh, Johnny, god, you've changed!

391. INT. MAIN ROOM, JONATHAN'S RANCH DAY

Camera slowly trucks through the room, en route to the breezeway.

JONATHAN VO

What're you doing?

ELLA VO

Counting your scars.

392. INT. BREEZEWAY DAY

Camera moves slowly down the breezeway toward the bedroom.

ELLA VO

Ten, eleven. You have -- here's another --
you have a dozen scars on your right arm.

JONATHAN VO

Is that how I've changed? I'm more
beat up?

393. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM DAY

And through the door, low shot, and across the carpet. Ella's
clothes beside the bed.

ELLA VO

And here's another. And, no, that's not just
how you've changed. You're just -- not what I
expected.

394. INT. JONATHAN'S BED DAY

Ella still holds his arm, examining it.

JONATHAN

I don't think I ever was what you expected.

Ella stops, doesn't look up because she can't reply to this near accusation. Jonathan changes the subject.

I watched your house in Rome once. Yeah, I stood down the street and watched your front door for a couple of hours.

ELLA

Our house in Rome?

JONATHAN

I wanted to know -- oh, what your furniture looked like. I thought about what you said to your husband in the mornings.

Ella still doesn't look up.

What's he like? What's he do?

395. JONATHAN AND ELLA

ELLA

He's a city engineer. We have a jet coptor. One son. Two cats. A place in the Alps. You want to hear all this?

JONATHAN

A son, really?

ELLA

We have a lot of friends. And -- my husband has a lover. And we have furniture a lot like yours.

JONATHAN

The same taste in furniture. How about that?

396. EXT. FIELD NEAR JONATHAN'S RANCH HOUSE DUSK

Jonathan and Ella on horseback.

ELLA

I watched you in the Tokyo game. I swore I'd never do it, but -- well, ENERGY had contacted me, so I watched. And afterward -- this is the odd part -- I swore I'd never come here. Then I did.

397. EXT. TOP OF A RIDGE DUSK

They go across the ridge, horses at a walk.

JONATHAN VO

What made you change your mind?

ELLA VO

Maybe -- the executives in Rome, how they feel about you. The game exists, I sometimes think, so they can watch you.

398. JONATHAN AND ELLA

Riding horseback, side by side.

JONATHAN

I think my last stupidity was not understanding how the executives felt about me. They want me killed. Or want me to quit -- a kind of public surrender.

ELLA

I know.

Jonathan turns and looks at her.

399. EXT. STABLE AREA DUSK

They ride in toward a waiting groom.

ELLA VO

But, you know, Johnny, all they want is a kind of incidental control over just a part of our lives.

They dismount, give the reins to the groom, and start up toward the house. Jonathan walks with his head down as Ella still tries to explain.

400. EXT. RANCH HOUSE LAWN LATE TWILIGHT

She takes his hand as they walk.

ELLA

I mean, they have control economically and

politically, but they also provide, you know
they do.

JONATHAN

What'd they provide?

401. INT. JONATHAN'S BED NIGHT

Ella and Jonathan, both in nightshirts, sit in the midst of
trays and dishes, a meal almost finished.

ELLA

Well, everything. They provide everything.

Jonathan sloshes liquid in his glass, stares into it. He can't
answer, so Ella continues.

Physical security, products, more diversion.

She sighs, tries a smile.

They want us to have -- our pleasure. And they
want their silly power, all power's silly --
especially if it doesn't even touch us. And so
they have their silly power and I'm here with you.

402. JONATHAN

Finishes his drink, puts it on the tray, leans back on pillows.
Smiles, alters the subject.

JONATHAN

You remember Houston? Remember living out in
River Oaks?

ELLA VO

I remember, but let's not --

JONATHAN

For years after that I thought, well, some ugly force took Ella away. But then I decided it was me. I decided, all right: in those days I just wasn't enough for her.

403. ELLA

She leans over, touches his leg, looks at him.

ELLA

It was the game, you know that.

Pause, as he doesn't respond.

I thought if I stayed we'd both be victims.
what else could I think?

404. JONATHAN AND ELLA

Jonathan leans back on the pillows still, musing.

JONATHAN

Then I changed my mind again, and I thought, no, it isn't just a matter of me or the game. Those things are symptoms, maybe, but there's another thing: something else is wrong, a big wrong we're part of.

ELLA

She takes his hands in hers.

Don't now, please. You can't straighten it
all out now.

JONATHAN

Takes her in his arms, smiles.

Hey, listen, you can stay a while, can't
you?

ELLA

Nuzzles against him.

A few days --

JONATHAN

Smiling, pulling her hair away from her face, kissing her.

There're things I've got to tell you. For
instance, Tokyo --

405. INT. THE TROPHY ROOM DAY

Jonathan and Ella strolling among the shining cups and medals
of the game. She wears the diaphanous gown. Slant of sunlight.

JONATHAN

In the streets of Tokyo, they came out and touched
us and called our names. And I didn't know what to
feel or think, exactly, then, later, I saw a Buddha.
It was tipped over on its side in this old temple

ground. And I had this odd thought. You with me?

ELLA

Yes, I'm listening --

406. JONATHAN AMONG HIS TROPHIES

JONATHAN

I was thinking of what somebody told me recently: how the men in the executive directorate aren't even known by name anymore. And in Tokyo -- it was as though we were -- uh, religious figures. Prophets or priests. You should've seen how they looked at us.

ELLA VO

Johnny --

JONATHAN

No, wait, Ella. It's as though people get a choice between comfort or freedom. And of course they've already chosen a long time ago, they chose comfort, but the thing is this: they look at me -- I feel this -- as though because I still get hurt out there on the track I have a secret.

407. JONATHAN AND ELLA

She comes over to him.

ELLA

But comfort is freedom, you must know that. The whole history of civilization, the struggle against need --

JONATHAN

That's not the struggle! That's never been the struggle!

Several trophies obstruct his view of Ella, so he pivots and clears them away with a sweep of his arm.

408. ELLA

Her shock at this. Noise of trophies hitting the floor.

409. JONATHAN

He finishes the job: wipes the trophy case clean. Then he turns to another display, picks up a small golden chalice, crushes it in one hand, throws it down. Then he stops, recovers.

410. EXT. GLADE OF TREES DAY

Long shot as Jonathan and Ella stroll the banks of a small stream beneath the trees. Dome of the ranch house beyond. Muted voices at first, growing gradually more distinct.

JONATHAN VO

I'm sorry. It's just the pressure. I feel like --

ELLA VO

I know, it's all right --

411. JONATHAN AND ELLA

Stopped beside the stream. He picks up some pebbles, tosses a couple in.

JONATHAN

They started this. So I've had to consider myself -- and the game -- and the circles get bigger --

He tosses another pebble.

412. EXT. BANK OF THE STREAM DAY

They watch the circles expand from the pebble in the water.

JONATHAN

Like that.

They turn and start uphill away from the stream.

413. JONATHAN AND ELLA

Going up the rise and into the field. Cloudy now, a threat of rain.

JONATHAN

And I wanted you here -- this may sound wrong -- because I wanted to try and remember myself.

ELLA

I understand.

JONATHAN

And love. Maybe it was love I wanted to try and remember.

414. EXT. CAR ON THE ROAD BESIDE THE FIELD DAY

They arrive at Jonathan's car. Ella stops and turns to him.

ELLA

You've got to get out now. You have to.

Jonathan looks at her, waits.

The next game: there won't be any substitutions
allowed.

Bites her lip, finishes in a near whisper.

You'll die, everybody'll die, Johnny.

A few drops of rain on the car beside them.

415. INT. JONATHAN'S CAR DAY

Rain on the windshield, sound of faint thunder. Jonathan watches
Ella who stares straight ahead.

JONATHAN

They told you about this rule change?

ELLA

Yes.

JONATHAN

They told you to come here and convince me to quit,
didn't they?

ELLA

I didn't come just because of that. You wanted me,
you asked for me.

416. JONATHAN

He stares ahead now, pondering. The rain lashes the car, its sound the transition to the next scene.

417. INT. JONATHAN'S BED NIGHT

Faint light. Sound of heavy rain as lightning illuminates Jonathan and Ella making love.

Jonathan rolls away from her. Sound of thunder as he gets up and goes into the bathroom.

Long pause over the empty room.

418. INT. WINDOW NEAR THE BED NIGHT

He emerges, tying on his kimono. Looks out. Lightning illuminates his stare once more and he turns.

419. INT. MULTIVISION CONTROLS NIGHT

He strolls thoughtfully in the darkened room, hands in the pockets of the kimono, head down. Finally goes idly to the console. Pushes a button.

Beyond, the small screen in the bathroom lights up with a still shot of Ella laughing.

420. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM NIGHT

Ella sits up, propped on her elbows in the light of the multivision screen.

Jonathan pushes another button and the console in the bedroom itself comes on: various poses of Ella, the pictures he continually looks at.

ELLA

Jonathan -- ?

421. MULTIVISION SCREENS JONATHAN'S POV

He presses another button and the images of Ella begin to burn away. When the screens are white, he shuts them off to blackness again.

422. INT. JONATHAN'S BEDROOM NIGHT

The two of them left once again in the dark silence of the rainstorm.

423. INT. BREAKFAST ROOM DAY

Jonathan eating alone again, toiling with a grapefruit. One of the guards comes in with luggage, sits it down, bends over Jonathan and the two of them confer. Jonathan nods and the guard carries the bags on out.

424. JONATHAN

He sips coffee, listens to the sound of indistinct voices in the house.

425. INT. BREAKFAST ROOM DAY

Ella comes in wearing travelling suit and fur cap. Busy pulling on her gloves and only mildly warm with Jonathan. He stands and they face each other.

JONATHAN

You could have some breakfast.

ELLA

She manages to shake her head no.

Good luck, Jonathan.

Finishes with her gloves. They move into an awkward embrace and she allows a kiss on the cheek. Guard appears in the doorway.

426. JONATHAN AND ELLA

JONATHAN

A new coldness in him, too, but one which he manufactures.

If you need anything on the way back,

Ella, ask the guard captain. Goodbye, now.

She manages a smile, then turns and goes out with the guard.

427. INT. BREAKFAST ROOM DAY

Jonathan sits back down. Looks at the dishes and food, waits.

428. JONATHAN

Raises his coffee cup to his lips as the motors of the jet coptor begin.

Keeps control of himself as the motors rev up, grow louder, and lift-off occurs. Sound carries into next scene.

429. INT. JONATHAN'S COPTOR DAY

Jonathan looks down as the coptor tilts. His guards sit there impassively.

430. EXT. JONATHAN'S COPTOR DAY

The coptor wings over Geneva. Flies by the water jet on the lake. Settles on a landing pad on the Quai du Mont Blanc and Jonathan emerges.

431. EXT. QUAI DU MONT BLANC DAY

Jonathan and guards hurry up the stone steps of a large, pillared building on the quai.

432. INT. RECEPTION DESK DAY

The captain of the guards speaks to the receptionist while Jonathan waits. The receptionist exits, everyone waits.

433. INT. STAIRWELL DAY

The receptionist opens a door and ushers Jonathan into an open stairwell, pointing the way. He starts downstairs, looking out over the railing as she exits and closes the door behind him. Whirring sounds. He comes down slowly.

434. INT. COMPUTER GALLERY JONATHAN'S OV

Jonathan goes down a corridor between whirring computers.
A sign and arrow points his way: LIBRARIAN'S STATION →

435. INT. LIBRARIAN'S STATION

A clutter of books, papers, cans of tapes covering several desks. No one present as Jonathan arrives and looks around. The console flashes, the overhead spotlights give a harsh glare to the station, but there is the definite atmosphere of an old-fashioned office mess.

THE LIBRARIAN arrives. He is a small man with dark glasses and a raspy, whisper-like voice. He moves between three moods: a dreamy confusion, awe for his visitor, and embarrassment for the disorientation of his gallery of computers.

LIBRARIAN

Hello, hello. Yes, the famous Jonathan E!

I can't believe it! Sorry things are a mess.

They shake hands and the Librarian also strokes Jonathan's forearm briefly, admiring the muscle.

Hard to believe. The roller ball champion.

Now then --

The Librarian turns, looks around the gallery absently, stares at his flashing console. His whisper deepens.

Now then, we're a little confused again here.

This is embarrassing. It's embarrassing to misplace things --

JONATHAN

You've misplaced some data?

LIBRARIAN

I know you think this couldn't happen.

He walks a few paces away, gazes beyond the computer console into the vastness of the gallery, suffers a vacant silence.

Misplaced, yes. The whole 13th century. It is embarrassing.

Takes off his dark glasses and begins to wipe them with his handkerchief.

Misplaced the computers. Several conventional computers, we can't find them. We're always moving things around, getting organized, my assistants and I, but this is Zero's fault.

Wipes his forehead with the handkerchief, puts the glasses back on. He notices that Jonathan is watching him, so he strides over to a microphone on the console and speaks into it -- his voice amplified throughout the gallery.

All right out there! We've checked all of sections 14 and 15 now! Keep looking!

He stares around the console vacantly again. Speaks into the microphone once more before replacing it.

Are you out there?

Turns, tries to smile at Jonathan.

I think we've lost an assistant, too. Ah, all right: you want to get started, don't you? But

we've lost these computers with all of
the 13th century in them. There wasn't much in the
century -- just Dante and a few corrupt popes -- but
it's so --

436. INT. CORRIDOR BETWEEN COMPUTERS DAY

The Librarian strolls aimlessly along and Jonathan follows.

LIBRARIAN

-- so distracting and embarrassing. All right,
though: you have unrestricted privileges here. But
you'll have to come many times, it will all take --

437. THE LIBRARIAN

He pauses, strokes his chin, looks adream.

LIBRARIAN

-- it'll take such effort.

438. INT. CORRIDOR BETWEEN COMPUTERS DAY

They turn up another aisle, Jonathan still following along.

JONATHAN

Do the executives come here?

LIBRARIAN

Oh, they used to. Some of them.

JONATHAN

What about the books?

LIBRARIAN.

Books? We have them all changed now, all transcribed. They're all films and tapes, they're all here, but different.

JONATHAN

There's no more books?

439. JONATHAN AND LIBRARIAN

They walk side by side. The Librarian is still disoriented and adream.

LIBRARIAN

We have Zero. He's the computer who tells us where everything is -- except not always.

The Librarian tangles his fingers, explaining.

We store data in liquid form now, you see, it's a lot like the brain. Colored oils. They turn and mix together -- and when stimulated they cross and fuse and blend. Liquid form.

JONATHAN

Could I find anything on the corporation wars?

LIBRARIAN

Wars, wars. World War I, the War of 1812, the Hundred Years' War, the War of the Roses.

440. INT. COMPUTER GALLERY DAY

Long shot, the two of them in a sea of computers, moving toward the island where Zero, the computer, dominates.

JONATHAN VO

I want to know about the formation of the executive class. And roller ball. How the governments were forced into bankruptcy, all that.

441. THE LIBRARIAN

Raises his glasses, looks into the distance as he walks. Still adream.

LIBRARIAN

You can meet Zero -- on the day he lost the 13th century. He probably did it on purpose.

442. INT. ZERO THE COMPUTER DAY

They reach the raised platform where Zero, an elevated sphere of multi-colored liquids, awaits them. A circular staircase winds around the sphere and a platform encircles it near the top. Lights pulse from the liquids -- a neon glow. A console sits below equipped with speakers and transmitters.

Jonathan and the Librarian move around it. The oily liquids glow and undulate.

LIBRARIAN

A memory pool, see. He's supposed to be our major file cabinet and tell us where things are --

The Librarian runs his hand around the underbelly of the sphere and it answers his words with its glow.

LIBRARIAN

Look here, Zero, we have a visitor: Jonathan E, the roller ball champion. You've filed away a lot of data on him, remember?

JONATHAN

Staring into the glow.

Does it answer you?

LIBRARIAN

Oh, it speaks -- when it wants to. And it finds things and loses them. And it gets punished.

The Librarian slowly goes up the circular staircase.

Zero serves Multivision all over the world. The viewers call in -- their calls come into that console beside you. Zero gets them any film, any piece of information they want. Ask Zero a question, if you want to. Ask him anything.

443. JONATHAN

Stands at the console, his face illumined by Zero's glow.

JONATHAN

What sort of question?

444. THE LIBRARIAN

He strolls around the platform which encircles Zero, gazing down into the open pool of glowing liquid at the top. Adream again, he answers absently.

LIBRARIAN

Anything. He'll tell us where to find it, section and lot, won't you, Zero? You're the one who knows where everything is and makes all the other computers talk to us, too.

445. JONATHAN

Uncertain, he nevertheless turns to the console and addresses the transmitter.

JONATHAN

The corporate wars, then. I'd like information on the corporate wars.

Looks up into Zero's glow and awaits an answer.

446. INT. ZERO THE COMPUTER DAY

High shot looking down on the Librarian, who strolls around the edges of the luminous pool. Jonathan looks up from below.

LIBRARIAN

Zero? You heard the question --

447. INT. COMPUTER GALLERY LIBRARIAN'S OV

The Librarian, embarrassed and confused with Zero's silence, strolls around the edge. Offers Jonathan a thin apologetic

laugh. Beyond, a view of the whole gallery: acres of computers whirring.

LIBRARIAN

Shakes his head in anger.

Zero, answer him -- !

448. LIBRARIAN

His eyes glaze once more as he lapses into reverie. He strolls in a circle around the pulsing light from the pool.

LIBRARIAN

This is Jonathan E, he has to know.

Did you see his muscles? But it's confused here, all lost. I hear it all out there, I listen to it, I know it's there --

Stops, listens. The whirring noise: soft but definite.

449. JONATHAN AND ZERO

He looks up at the Librarian. A luminous spray begins to fall around him.

450. LIBRARIAN AND ZERO

The Librarian kicks the liquid inside the sphere, sending out a spray of neon.

LIBRARIAN

I don't want to punish you, I don't. But you heard the question and you know. You know about that, but you never answer --

The Librarian digs another kick into the pool. A bright spray of oily liquid flies out.

You never answer that one, do you!

Another kick. Zero is pulsing and glowing angrily.

It's so -- embarrassing --

451. JONATHAN

He watches, standing beside Zero's heaving electrical glow. The liquid inside the sphere is boiling now and emitting bursts of light. A neon spray is falling around Jonathan.

452. INT. COMPUTER GALLERY DAY

Shot over the whole gallery, Zero's angry glow in the distance. The Librarian continues to kick.

453. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK DAY

Jonathan skating alone.

454. INT. JONATHAN'S CAR DAY

Cletus and Jonathan sitting together, a guard driving. Cletus upset, Jonathan stoic.

455. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK DAY

Jonathan skates into the infield, stops, slumps on a bench. His face and body dripping with sweat.

456. INT. JONATHAN'S CAR DAY

CLETUS

So that's it, Ella was right: no substitutions.

How can anybody play with no subs?

Jonathan shakes his head wearily.

457. JONATHAN AND EXERCISE GEAR

Pouring sweat, Jonathan works with stretch exerciser. He practices blows, pivoting his body, while holding the stretcher.

458. INT. JONATHAN'S CAR DAY

Jonathan slumped in the seat, his Spanish hat down over his eyes. Cletus anguished.

CLETUS

What happened to the game? There isn't a game without rules -- and with no substitutions there won't be players, just killers.

459. JONATHAN EXERCISING

Touching his toes from a sitting position, working hard. He stops, at last, his face pained.

460. EXT. JONATHAN'S CAR DAY

The car turns up a long drive toward a sanitarium.

461. FACE OF AN OLD MAN

An old man, disoriented, crazy, lost. Camera pans away.

462. EXT. SANITARIUM LAWN DAY

And trucks up the lawn. Manor house in the background. A nurse walks with a patient, who mumbles and nods and gestures with palsied hands.

463. EXT. SANITARIUM DAY

Trucking around the manor house: high shot. Passing a window where a woman sits with a vacant gaze.

Passing the front drive where Jonathan's car sits. Cletus leans against the car, arms folded.

Around the sanitarium, passing bushes, more windows. High shot, still, as the solarium comes into view.

464. EXT. SOLARIUM DAY

Through the glass, inside, Jonathan stands talking to a man dressed in hospital white. Muted voices. Camera trucks around the outside glass as they talk. Moonpie's bubble comes into view.

465. JONATHAN AND DOCTOR MOONPIE'S OV

The bubble containing Moonpie: beyond it, the doctor turns and leaves the room and Jonathan looks at Moonpie.

466. INT. SOLARIUM DAY

Sunlight slants in, illuminating Moonpie inside the bubble. Jonathan steps forward as if thinking how to begin a conversation.

Stopped beside the bubble, he looks in at Moonpie. Elaborate tubing enters the bubble and Moonpie's body, feeding his brain, arms, torso. Jonathan picks up one of the tubes in his fingers.

467. JONATHAN

He pinches the tube once, twice, three times.

JONATHAN

That hurt? You feel anything? It's
me, Jonathan.

468. INT. SOLARIUM DAY

Jonathan looks around. Bluebonnets in the room and ivy. Gives the tube a last squeeze.

JONATHAN

Feel that? It's me, bringing a little hurt
again.

Jonathan gazes at Moonpie.

I've been thinking, well, it's like you're a god now. I've thought, maybe you're not less, maybe you're more: your atoms swimming around with everything else. Maybe you know what I don't.

469. JONATHAN AND MOONPIE

JONATHAN

I've been so stupid. It's a shame, Moonpie, being so stupid so long.

He sighs, looks away, gathers his thoughts.

But it was simple: they began to change their minds about roller ball, so they decided they had to get rid of me. The game was meant to level everybody. To show how hopeless personal effort was. So everybody would just fall back into a -- narcotic of comfort.

470. JONATHAN MOONPIE'S POV

JONATHAN

Except it didn't level me. They couldn't work out the rules so I got killed in the game -- so far that hasn't worked out, anyway. They wanted me to

say I was scared and quit, then, but I wouldn't do that either. I worried they'd just arrange an accident, but they wanted the game to beat me-- that was important, I finally understood that. So I've been a kind of -- oh, a kind of political problem.

He begins to circle the bubble, his mood reflective.

And now there's a game in New York.

471. MOONPIE'S BUBBLE

Jonathan circles it slowly.

JONATHAN

So roller ball was supposed to do away with its players, it was supposed to do away with all names, but a name came out of it and became known. It could've been me or you or anyone. And so they have to fix that. They have the beginnings of a revolution with a name, they have a religion starting up. There are some things they don't understand either.

Looks in at Moonpie and smiles.

God, I feel so stubborn. I don't even know why, it scares me, I know I'm probably going to die, you'll be in there pumping away after I'm gone. But I won't quit.

He turns, looks at the bluebonnets, looks up at the sun coming through the glass and back at Moonpie.

See, this is a nice place, a solarium. The sun's rays'll follow you around in here, they'll always be on you. I wouldn't mind this myself when it's all over. You've got it made, bluebonnets and everything.

472. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Noise and faces of the crowd, waiting expectantly.

473. INT. LOCKER ROOM NIGHT

The players shuffle around beginning to dress.

474. INT. TRACK INFIELD NIGHT

A row of motorcycles gleaming and waiting. Camera trucks toward two white-jacketed orderlies, a referee, one of Jonathan's guards, a stack of stretchers and first aid gear. Finally stops on a gleaming roller ball -- which reflects, again, the crowd. The crowd's low murmur over all this.

475. INT. LOCKER ROOM, JONATHAN'S DRESSING BOOTH NIGHT

He tapes his ribs. Finishing, he pulls on his leathery suit and zips up.

476. INT. ROLLER BALL STADIUM BARTHOLOMEW'S POV

The executive turns slowly, looking over the crowd and track.

477. INT. JONATHAN'S DRESSING BOOTH NIGHT

Beside the mirror are his hat and helmet. He looks at them, picks up his favorite Spanish hat -- perhaps for the last time -- and tries it on. Tilts it, gives it a last appreciative look.

478. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

The New York team dressed in silver moves around the track loosening up. The crowd begins to stir. Band music. The noises of the bikers revving up.

479. JONATHAN

Sitting on a bench dressed and ready except for the helmet beside him. Stadium noise.

480. CUT IN: BLUEBONNETS? MOONPIE'S BUBBLE BEYOND

481. JONATHAN

Stadium noise resumes. He twirls the wheel of his skate once, then twice.

482. HOUSTON TEAM ON THE TRACK

Jonathan leads the way as they pick up speed. They ride in close formation, bikers on the flanks. The crowd begins its chant: "Jon-athan! Jon-athan!"

483. CANNONS

The cannons explode in close sequence sending three balls into play.

484. BIKERS ATTACK

The Houston bikers attack the New York pack. A pile up of men and machines.

485. BIKER PINNED UNDER HIS MOTORCYCLE

As part of the pile up, a biker's leg is twisted and pinned under his downed bike. Two New York runners descend on him and finish him.

486. JONATHAN AND NEW YORK SKATER

A skater just beyond Jonathan's reach taunts him. Jonathan pulls off his glove and hits him with it.

487. THE CROWD

It begins its feverish chant: "Go! Go!"

488. THE NEW YORK PACK

Big and tough, they re-group and form the pack. Yell at each other as they skate, point toward Houston team and pick up speed.

489. PICKUP VIGNETTE

A New York player, having fielded a ball, starts to climb aboard with a biker who swoops off the wall. Two Houston skaters intercept. The runner is knocked away and the biker starts off again -- with a Houston skater as his rider.

The biker turns first one way, then another. Before he can do anything, the Houston skater belts him and over they go.

490. OFF-CENTERED BALLS

Cannons constantly firing. A ball sails high, again, and plows into the stands as the crowd screams.

491. DOWNED NEW YORK BIKER

The New Yorker crawls toward the infield, but Jonathan glides by and delivers a vicious kick which ends the journey.

492. JONATHAN TRAILED BY NEW YORK BIKER

Jonathan skates to avoid an opposition biker which swerves to stay with him. They pass downed players, dodge a ball which careens by. Finally, the bike speeds up and at the last minute turns and skids into Jonathan. Jonathan goes into the air and the biker, very skilled, recovers and is upright, laughing, as Jonathan tumbles into the infield.

493. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

The crowd roars as the track is strewn with fallen players. Bikes and cannons still loud.

494. JONATHAN

Rising slowly again in the infield. Dazed, he shakes his head.

495. CUT IN: IMAGE OF ELLA, LAUGHING, SAME AS IN MULTIVISION STILL SEOT

496. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK AND INFIELD NIGHT

Jonathan fastens his helmet, waits, and rejoins the Houston pack as it comes by.

497. JONATHAN AND HOUSTON PACK

Skating, he regains his strength. Takes his place at the head of the pack. The Houston team diminished now: four skaters, two runners, two bikers.

Jonathan skates ahead, leaving the pack behind.

498. INJURED NEW YORK SKATER

Jonathan catches an injured opponent, grabs him and drops him with a heavy blow. The Houston pack overtakes the player and finishes him.

499. NEW YORK RUNNER

Standing at a wrecked motorcycle, the runner picks up its broken chain, twirls it, and waits for the Houston pack. Jonathan, in advance of the pack, dodges the first blow and skates on. A Houston skater then takes a blow, but before the New Yorker can begin again a Houston biker bumps him into the infield.

500. INDIVIDUAL BATTLE

With bikers and balls whizzing by, two opposing skaters wrestle for advantage on the track. Finally the New York skater grabs the Houston player around the head, holds him, and gouges his eye.

501. STATISTICS BOARD

Score: Houston 0, New York 0. Dead: 7 Out of Action: 4

502. THE PACKS COLLIDE

The Houston pack overtakes the New York pack and the two teams merge and pile up. A Houston runner is carried away by a direct hit from a ball as he stands to fight.

503. ROLLER BALL TRACK BARTHOLEMEW'S OY

The executive views the action below, then turns to an aide with disgust, says something, but the roar of the crowd drowns his words.

504. NEW YORKER AND DOWNED TEAMMATE

A New York skater tries to help, but his fallen teammate can't make it. Jonathan chases him away and a Houston runner comes up and clubs the helpless man left on the track.

505. EXPLOSION

A Houston bike high on the track takes a direct hit from a ball, the bike explodes, fragments going everywhere. Burning gasoline runs down the track. The biker, burning, makes it to aides in the infield.

506. NEW YORK PACK

A smaller pack regroups and starts to move. The last Houston biker swoops down from the wall, but passes them without contact. As the New Yorkers watch the biker, Jonathan -- also high on the wall -- hurtles toward them. Before impact he crouches low and makes a cannonball of himself. Skaters fly and Jonathan escapes as other Houston skaters join the fight.

507. INFIELD

Sheets over dead players. A first aid attendant runs onto the track near the infield to help a downed Houston player, but a New York biker comes by and bumps him back into the infield.

508. JONATHAN'S GUARDS USHERED OFF

Also in the infield, the Houston Team Executive and other executives usher Jonathan's bodyguards into the infield tunnel. Only Michaels glances back, worried about Jonathan, as they disappear.

509. OFF-CENTERED BALL

The ball jumps crazily, sails high in the air, and comes down splintering the track.

510. BIKER TEROUGH THE FLAMES

The gasoline spill now covers the track from top to bottom. The skilled New York biker roars through the fire, skids into a turning stop, and waits. A smile on his face. As Jonathan comes through the flames, the biker revs up again and goes after him.

511. JONATHAN CEASED AGAIN

Once more the skilled New York biker closes in on Jonathan. This time a Houston biker intercepts. The two opposing bikers bump each other -- a stand-off. Finally, though, as he skates to get away, Jonathan is upended by a ball which speeds past. He sprawls in the track again.

512. JONATHAN ON THE TRACK

He lies full length across the track as another New York biker zeroes in. At the last second, he turns and the biker slips by. The crowd is now chanting for New York.

513. CUT IN: IMAGE OF LIBRARIAN AND DROPLETS OF NEON LIQUID

514. JONATHAN

Once again, he gets up. Begins skating slowly, regains himself.

515. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGET

Bikers riding high on the wall, the crowd, the whole carnage in a long shot.

516. JONATHAN SKATING

Dazed, he carries on. Swirl of noise and movement around him.

517. CUT IN: IMAGE OF MACKIE IN HER DIAPHRANOUS GOWN IN DAWN LIGHT
518. CUT IN: BLUEBONNETS
519. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Two packs skate for position across the track from each other. The packs are small now: Jonathan, one runner, one skater for Houston, and two skaters, two bikers, and a runner for New York.

520. THE QUICK CONFERENCE

Jonathan and his two teammates stop briefly. He points high on the wall toward the flames and the runner heads for that spot. Jonathan and the remaining Houston skater head toward the smoke and flames as the New York pack rounds the corner and heads toward them.

521. JONATHAN AND HOUSTON TEAMMATE

They skate through the flames, then turn around. Picking up speed, they head back into the smoke and flames -- to meet the remaining New York players head on.

522. EMERGING THROUGH THE FLAMES

Jonathan and the other Houston skater tumble out of the flames toward the surprised New York team. The New York bikers escape and go by into the smoke themselves, but Jonathan and his teammate drop the two remaining New York skaters.

523. THE HOUSTON RUNNER AMBUSHED

The two New York bikers trap the Houston runner high on the wall. The runner swings, but the skilled biker smashes the runner into the wall. Then, dragging him along, the biker guns his motorcycle. The Houston runner is dragged back through the fire where he catches ablaze, then he is deposited in the mouth of a cannon high on the wall.

524. NEW YORK BIKER

Happy with his work, the biker turns with a grin. Then it fades as he goes after Jonathan and the last Houston skater.

525. JONATHAN AND NEW YORK SKATER

Jonathan carries the New Yorker like a rag and deftly drops him in front of a ball -- a move like a matador, hands held high, as the man is carried away to his death.

526. STAT BOARD: Still Houston 0, New York 0.

527. NEW YORK RUNNER AND BIKER

A ball is fielded and the New York runner climbs aboard with his biker.

528. JONATHAN

He skates through the flames once more, spins and stops. He picks up a dropped paddle and sets it afire on the burning track.

529. NEW YORK BIKER AND RIDER

They approach the burning portion of the track once more.

530. END OF THE LAST RUNNER

As the New Yorkers come through the smoke, Jonathan jams the burning paddle over their heads. Caught in the fiery webbing, they spin out of control and the bike explodes.

531. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

The crowd begins to chant Jonathan's name once more. On the track, only two remaining: Jonathan and the skilled New York biker.

532. BARTHOLEMEW

Mouth tight with anger, he watches.

533. CUT IN: ELLA SITTING ALONE BEFORE HER MULTIVISION SET. THE CHANT RISING AROUND HER

534. JONATHAN

He skates slowly, looking for the New York biker. The chant rises and gains tempo.

535. CUT IN: MOONPIE, SERENE IN HIS BUBBLE, AS THE FAINT SOUND OF THE CHANT INVADERS THE SOLARIUM.

536. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Chanting, the crowd boils. Arms over the sides of the track. The cannons still fire at infrequent intervals.

537. THE NEW YORK BIKER

He sits waiting for the last duel, watching Jonathan slowly circling the track as the chant heightens.

538. JONATHAN

He skates warily, picks up the handle of the burning paddle as he goes by. Looks back as the biker looms into view high on the wall.

539. THE MISS

Jonathan and the biker moving together, the biker riding high on the wall and looking for an opening. At the curve, the biker swoops down, but Jonathan sidesteps him, throws the handle, misses.

540. INFIELD

The biker skids into the infield, knocking down attendants, referees and bystanders. Determined and angry -- the mean smile still on his face -- he gets up and goes after Jonathan again.

541. JONATHAN

A closeup as Jonathan moves by the chanting crowd. His weariness shows.

542. THE CHASE

The biker overtakes Jonathan again -- almost. At the last second Jonathan enters the smoke and fire still rising from the track.

543. EMERGING

Only the New York biker emerges from the smoke on the other side. He skids to a halt, looks for his prey. Finally, he goes back into the smoke.

544. EMERGING AGAIN

And comes back out again -- revving hard, stopping, looking for Jonathan and not finding him. Turns, goes back once more. Heads for spot high on the wall.

545. AND EMERGING ONCE MORE

And the biker comes through again -- slowly this time, smoke around his body, so he bats it away with his arm as he moves downtrack. Suddenly, Jonathan emerges from high on the wall, skating hard, and closing the gap behind the unsuspecting biker.

546. DROPKICK

Jonathan is almost on the biker when the New Yorker finally realizes it. Then, a mighty dropkick: the biker is separated from the bike, which spins away into the infield.

547. JONATHAN AND THE BIKER

The biker tries to rise when Jonathan catches him, tackles him, and both of them plunge into the infield.

548. INFIELD

The chant of Jonathan's name is overbearing. There, over the fallen biker, the last New York player, Jonathan finds a shiny roller ball lying in the infield, raises it, and finishes the man. He stands up and jerks his helmet off. Throws it aside. The chant booms out and he covers his ears.

549. JONATHAN SKATING ALONE

The stands go wild as he begins to skate again.

550. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Long shot, Jonathan the solitary skater. The chant still booms. In the distance, the Stat Board: No score.

551. JONATHAN

As he skates, he throws off his gloves, loosens his suit. The

chant still builds and reverberates.

552. MR BARTHOLEMEW

He turns to leave, pushing his way through the crowd, his mouth tight with disappointment, his eyes fearful of the crowd's frenzy.

553. INT. ROLLER BALL TRACK NIGHT

Silence now except for the sound of Jonathan's skates as he comes around a far turn and heads toward the camera. Slow motion as he rumbles forward.

Eventually he comes near, the echo of his skates dominant now, though, in the stands, the crowd can be seen cheering and throwing their fists in the air.

554. JONATHAN

A last giant image as he moves up. His face filled with pain and despair and victory. The camera freezes this solemn stare.